The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY Hudson's Bay Company. INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670 OUTFIT 273 JUNE 1942

An Eskimo Song—

MY BREATH

by Orpingalik

(He with the Willow Twig)

Poem and picture from the late William Gibson

Orpingalik

THIS is no imaginary situation conjured up in the mind of the poet. It is Orpingalik's own song, composed while he was actually lying ill in his snowhouse, thinking of the days of his strength, when he was a mighty hunter. He also composed the music, which has not yet been recorded. The translation is from the works of the celebrated Danish explorer, Knud Rasmussen.

I will sing a song,
A song that is strong.
Unaya—unaya.
Sick I have lain since autumn,
Helpless I lay, as were I
My own child.

Sad, I would that my woman
Were away to another house
To a husband
Who can be her refuge,
Safe and secure as winter ice.
Unaya—unaya.

Sad, I would that my woman
Were gone to a better protector
Now that I lack strength
To rise from my couch.
Unaya—Unaya.

Dost thou know thyself?
So little thou knowest of thyself.
Feeble I lie here on my bench
And only my memories are strong!
Unaya—unaya.

Let me recall the great white
Polar Bear.
With its back humped high,
Snout in the snow, it came!
He really believed
He alone was a male
And ran towards me.
Unaya—unaya.

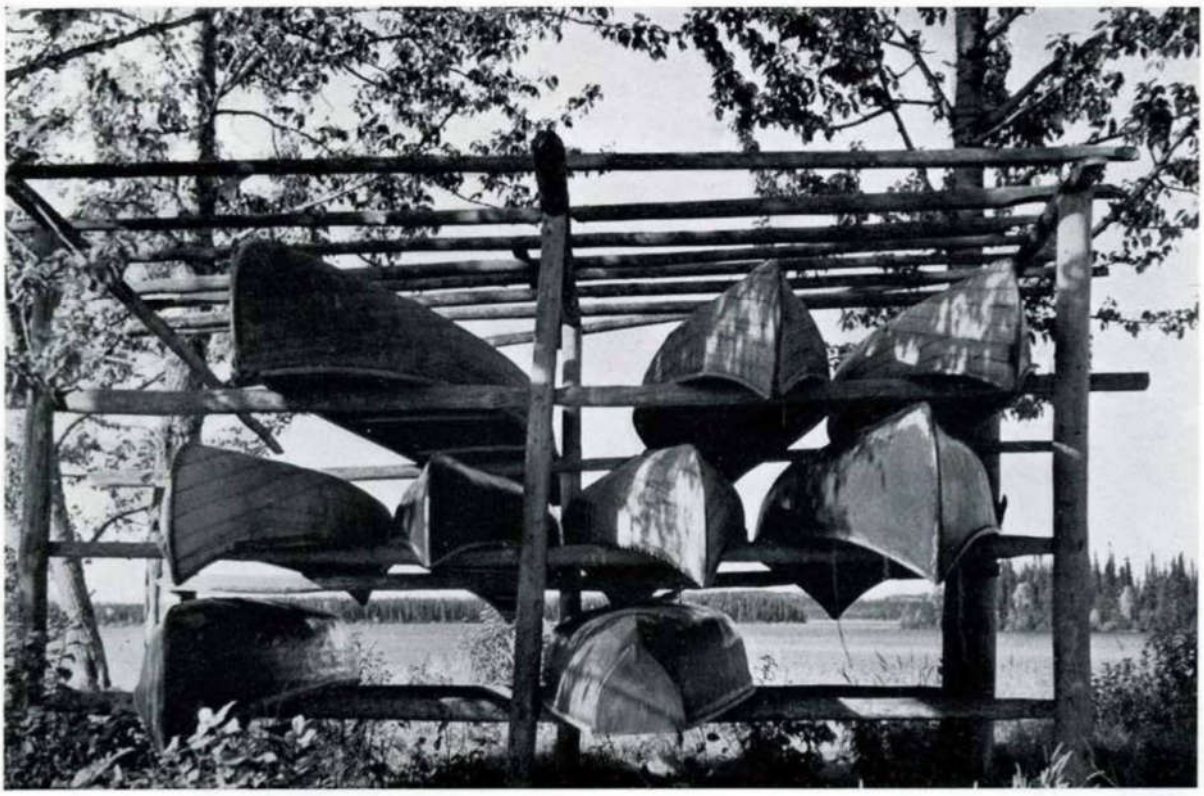
It threw me down
Again and again,
Then breathless departed
And lay down to rest,
Hid by a mound on a floe.
Heedless it was, and unknowing
That I was to be its fate.
Deluding itself
That he alone was a male,
And unthinking
That I too was a man!
Unaya—unaya.

I shall ne'er forget that great blubber-
A fjord seal, [beast,
I killed from the sea ice
Early, long before dawn,
While my companions at home
Still lay like the dead
Faint from failure and hunger,
Sleeping.
With meat and with swelling blubber
I returned so quickly
As if merely running over ice
To view a breathing hole there.
And yet it was
An old and cunning male seal.
But before he had even breathed
My harpoon head was fast
Mortally deep in his neck.

That was the manner of me then:
Now I lie feeble on my bench
Unable even a little blubber to get
For my wife's stone lamp.
The time, the time will not pass,
While dawn gives place to dawn
And spring is upon the village.
Unaya—unaya.

But how long shall I lie here?
How long?
And how long must she go a-begging
For fat for her lamp,
For skins for clothing
And meat for a meal?
A helpless thing—a defenceless woman.
Unaya—unaya.

Knowest thou thyself?
So little thou knowest of thyself!
While dawn gives place to dawn,
And spring is upon the village.
Unaya—unaya.



Canoes at Mistassinny. S. R. Crone.

OUTFIT 273

The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

JUNE 1942

CONTENTS

Gannet Alighting—G. Harper Hall 1
Campbell of the Yukon—C. Parnell 4
Paddy Gibson—Alfred Copland 7
Sea Birds of Labrador—John R. Forbes 8
Voyageur Songs—Marius Barbeau 15
Labrador Voyage—C. N. Stephen 20
Birch Bark Canoe—Lynus R. Pattee 24
Indian Wedding—Raymond Bell 28
John Berens, Pilot—George Pendleton 30
Trout Along the Albany—Edwin Mills 32
Lost on the Prairies—John Pritchard 36
Hudson's Bay Bride—Marion Nichols 40
Post Gardens 42
Summer Packet 44
London's Beaver Club 46
Book Reviews 50

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE — Hudson's Bay Company. — WINNIPEG, CANADA

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670.

THE BEAVER is published quarterly by the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, commonly known as the Hudson's Bay Company. It is edited at Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, at the office of the Canadian Committee. Yearly subscription, one dollar; single copies, twenty-five cents. THE BEAVER is entered at the second class postal rate. Its editorial interests include the whole field of travel, exploration and trade in the Canadian North as well as the current activities and historical background of the Hudson's Bay Company, in all its departments throughout Canada. THE BEAVER assumes no liability for unsolicited manuscripts or photographs. Contributions are however solicited, and the utmost care will be taken of all material received. Correspondence on points of historic interest is encouraged. The entire content of THE BEAVER is protected by copyright, but reproduction rights will be given freely upon application. Address: THE BEAVER, Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg.

CAMPBELL OF THE YUKON

The first of three articles on one of Canada's most celebrated explorers

by C. Parnell
Winnipeg

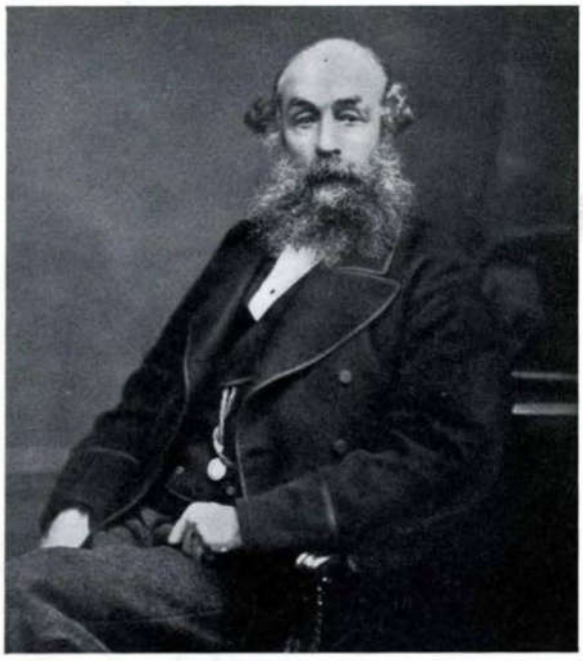
IT was just a hundred years ago that the first Hudson's Bay Company fort was built in what is now the Yukon Territory. The post was Frances Lake —now an outpost of Fort Selkirk—and the builder was Robert Campbell.

Campbell was one of the finest officers in the service of the Company—a true hero of whom Canadians may well be proud. He belonged to that splendid group of "Commissioned Gentlemen" who during the nineteenth century built up the great traditions of the Hudson's Bay Company—men like Rae and Rowand and Douglas and McLoughlin and Ogden, who carried the H B C ensign across the continent to the three oceans and made it a symbol among the Indians of honour and fearlessness and fair dealing. Time and again these men looked death in the face. Danger and hardship were their constant companions. But none of them led more adventurous lives, nor met adversity with greater fortitude, than Robert Campbell of the Yukon.

A tall, powerful Scot from Perthshire, Campbell joined the Company in 1830 at the age of twenty-two. He was sent out to the Mackenzie River District in 1834, and the following summer was placed in charge of Fort Liard on the Liard River. Throughout the period of his service he kept careful journals; but all were lost in a fire in Quebec about 1871. The chief source of information on his exploits is an autobiography he wrote about 1890, from which the quotations in this article have been made.

It was not long before he was entrusted with a dangerous mission. In the spring of '36, he was left temporarily in charge of Fort Simpson, depot of the Mackenzie River District, at the junction of the Mackenzie and Liard Rivers. One day in August, a Company clerk, John Hutchinson, who had been sent to establish a new fort on Dease Lake, unexpectedly returned. He and his men had a hair-raising tale to tell. They had not gone far from Fort Halkett, on the Liard, when they heard that hundreds of Coast Indians were approaching their camp to murder them. The entire party thereupon fled in a panic for home, leaving the outfit of trade goods for the new post scattered along the trail.

Campbell, amongst others, was disgusted at their cowardly behaviour, and volunteered to lead a more courageous party to establish the post on Dease Lake. He had some difficulty in finding enough willing men, and once had to turn back to Fort Simpson in order to replace deserters. The result was that they had to winter at Fort Halkett, at the junction of the Smith and Liard Rivers. However, just to satisfy his curiosity, he went a little farther up the Liard to Portage Brulé, where Hutchinson's party had so hurriedly decamped. And it turned out just as expected. There were the bales of goods, "scattered about all the way down to the water's edge, just as they had been dropped by the men running to the canoes." No one had visited the spot since—except the wild animals who had done away with the food.



Robert Campbell in later life.

This discovery served to reassure the men, and the following spring the party set out for Dease Lake. But not before Campbell had received a letter from Governor Simpson, commending his "spirited tender" of his services, "which has called forth the approbation of the Council and led to your promotion to the rank of Clerk with an advance of salary." Gauging his man, the governor added: "Robert Campbell is not the man I take him to be, unless in due time he plants the H B standard on the shores of the Pacific."

Dease Lake was reached at the beginning of July and the fort started "about five miles from the mouth of the Nahany"—that is, from the start of Dease River. Leaving some of his men to build, Campbell started with his interpreter, Hoole, and two fine young Indians, Lapie and Kitza, to explore the west side of the mountains. These two Indians were to be his faithful companions in many a hazardous adventure.

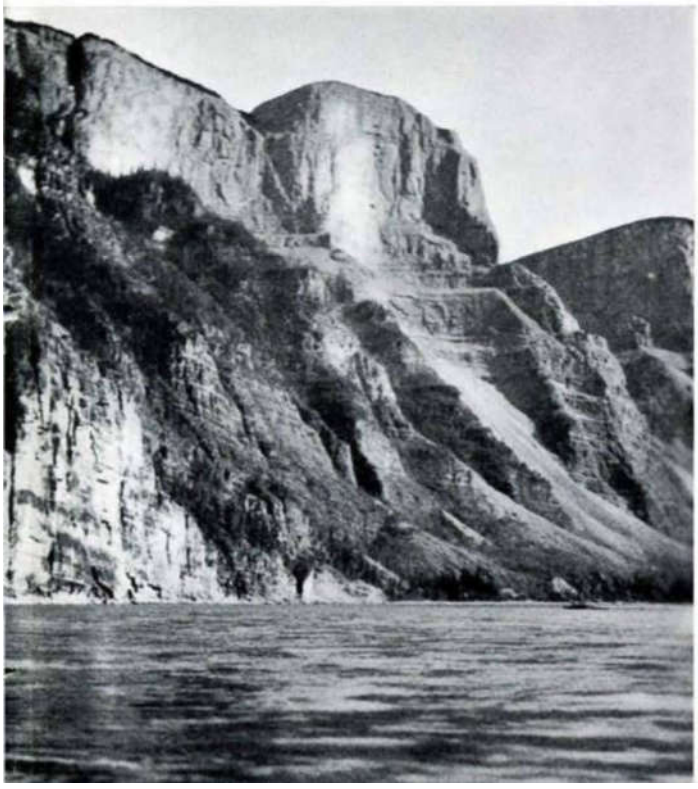
On the second day, they came to Terror Bridge over the Tuya River, where John McLeod and his exploring party had turned back four years before. Across the bridge—"a rude, rickety structure of pine poles, spliced together with withes, and stretched high above the foaming torrent"—was an Indian standing in front of his hut. Campbell, with Lapie and Kitza, made the perilous crossing, but when they gained the other side, the Indian had vanished. To their surprise they found his dinner cooking in a *metal* pot. As they were hungry, they helped themselves, leaving a knife and some tobacco in payment. And it was well that they did so.

They recrossed the bridge and camped close by. Next morning, a party of Indians appeared, among them the owner of the hut. Campbell hoisted the H B C ensign and beckoned to them, and the chief, who had seen the peace offering of tobacco, approached, holding out the pipe of peace. It turned out that he and his followers had come from a huge Indian camp in a valley about twelve miles away. Campbell, who wanted to establish friendly relations with the Indians wherever he went, announced his intention of visiting the camp. But the Nahanni chief told him that on no account must he do so. The camp was ruled by an Indian despot, he explained, who made his living by trading for the white men on the coast—the Russians —and he would surely kill his white rivals.

Campbell however insisted, and set out. But the Nahannis were so insistent in their turn that he told Hoole and one of his Indians to go back and wait for him at the bridge. If Campbell and the other Indian had not returned in two days, the others might conclude that they had been done for, and should then cut down the bridge and hurry back to Dease Lake. Neither of the Indian lads, however, would desert him, but vowed they would die with him if necessary. "Their father," they said, "had told them that if ever they deserted me in time of danger, they need never come back themselves." So all four went on to meet whatever might befall them.

From the top of a hill they caught their first glimpse of the great camp. It was the largest concourse of Indians Campbell had ever seen, gathered from all the western slopes of the Rockies and from the Pacific Coast. Every year they met there to trade with "Shakes," the powerful chief whom the Nahannis regarded with such awe. This forest potentate acted as agent for the Russians at Fort Highfield, situated at the mouth of the Stikine, and ruled over an immense number of Indians of different tribes. The valley was chosen for the rendezvous partly because the multitude could live easily on the salmon which could be caught in thousands in the nearby Stikine.

Mountainous cliffs at the junction of the Liard and Nahanni.



Accompanied by an Indian who could speak a little English, Campbell took his courage in both hands and descended into the close-packed, waiting crowd. "Every word I said," he wrote afterwards, "was taken up and yelled by a hundred throats till the surrounding rocks and valley echoed with the sound. Presently a lane was cleared through the crowd for Shakes to come down to me."

As the great chief approached, Campbell saw that he was tall and powerfully built. He shook hands with the white visitor and led him to a tent that had been specially erected for the occasion. When they and some of the other dignitaries had seated themselves inside, to the Scotsman's amazement the savage despot produced a bottle of whisky, and everyone in the tent had a drappie!

Meanwhile the clamour of voices outside was growing in intensity. Suddenly the tent was swept from its moorings, and the friendly Nahannies stood there, full of wrath, shouting: "If the white chief is killed, there will be plenty of blood spilled here!"

Campbell, however, had taken the precaution of arming himself to the teeth. "I had pistols and a dirk in my belt, and a double barrelled percussion gun, which was a great source of wonder to them, as the only guns they were familiar with were single barrelled flint locks. Shakes wanted me to fire so that he might see how the gun went off. Fearing this was only a ruse to render my gun harmless, I took the precaution to have ball, powder and cap in my hand ready to slip in immediately after firing a shot. At every report the whole camp yelled, clapping their hands on their mouth at the same time, as the noise was frightful."

This show of force evidently impressed Shakes and his gang. Campbell strolled around the camp, and presently found that some of the Coast Indians present knew Dr. McLoughlin and James Douglas. So he wrote some notes to them and to others, and asked the Indians to deliver them. Later he heard that the notes safely reached their destinations.

"At length getting clear of Shakes and the crowd on the plain in safety, which was more than I expected when I first went among them, I found my small party also all right on the top of the hill, where I forthwith hoisted the H.B.C. flag, and cut H.B.C. and date on a tree, thus taking possession of the country for the Company.

"Here too I first met a remarkable woman, the Chieftainess of the Nahanies. The Nahany tribe over which she and her father, a very old man, held sway were then about 500 strong. The Chieftainess said I was the first white man she ever saw. Unfortunately we had no proper interpreter, so that our conversation was very limited. She commanded the respect not only of her own people, but of the tribes they had intercourse with. She was a fine looking woman rather above the middle height and about 35 years old. In her actions and personal appearance she was more like the whites than the pure Indian race. She had a pleasing face lit up with fine intelligent eyes, which when she was excited flashed like fire. She was tidy and tasteful in her dress. To her kindness and influence we owed our lives more than once."

The Chieftainess accompanied Campbell and his men for some miles and urged them to keep going until they were across Terror Bridge, for fear that some of Shakes' young bloods would pursue and kill them. They reached Dease Lake in safety, and found the buildings well advanced. Campbell and Lapie left

almost at once to take the news of his discovery to Fort Simpson, and to get some necessary supplies with the trading outfit for Dease Lake. They set off in a pine-bark canoe, and at abandoned Fort Halkett changed it for a birch-bark. After very nearly sinking in Hell's Gate rapids, where the banks of the turbulent Liard are sheer walls of rock, they reached the depot in safety about mid-August.

There they found Chief Trader Murdock McPherson still in charge, and Campbell told him of his experiences. The garbled version of his visit to the great camp, which McPherson related to James Hargrave a few months later, differs considerably, however, from Campbell's own account. According to McPherson there was a brigade of Russian traders in the camp, the "commander in chief" of which was a Mr. Monrobe, who "received him with apparent politeness and introduced him to three other ragged officers like himself and treated him to a glass of whiskey." To Campbell's bitter disappointment, the chief trader, who seems to have been the soul of Scottish parsimony, refused to grant him any more provisions, and he had to return with a ridiculously small outfit of goods to spend the winter at Dease Lake.

And a miserable winter it was. Several times the party was on the verge of starvation. Game animals seemed to have left the country entirely, and Campbell had to send half a dozen of his men back to the Liard to forage for themselves. The rest scattered in miserable camps up and down the shores of the lake, living on fish, small animals and birds, lichens, skins, parchment, and anything else they could digest.

To make matters worse, they were continually alarmed by parties of Indians. But the arrival of one of these bands was most providential. The men at the fort were entirely without food of any sort when the Nahanni chieftainess arrived with a party of her hunters, well supplied with fish and meat. "Her kindness to us," says Campbell, "was unbounded. She ordered her servants (all leading Indians there had slaves) to cook the best they had for our use, and it was served under her own directions. We partook of a sumptuous repast—the first for many a day—consisting of excellent fried salmon and delicious fresh caribou meat. I felt painfully humiliated that I could not make a suitable return, or even send her, when she left with a train of dogs to the south end of the Lake. I could only cherish the wish in silence."

Her whole party spent the night at the fort, and the white men had an opportunity of witnessing the remarkable power she had over her warriors.

"In the course of the evening when everything had seemingly quieted down for the night, yell after yell suddenly broke the silence, the now furious savages rushed into the room where [A.R.] McLeod, [Jr.,] and I were sitting, loading their guns; some of them seized our weapons from racks on the wall and would assuredly have shot us had not the Chieftainess, who was lodged in the other end of the house, rushed in and commanded silence. She found out the instigator of the riot, walked up, and stamping her foot on the ground, repeatedly spat in his face, her eyes blazing with anger. Peace and quiet reigned as suddenly as the outbreak had burst forth. I have seen many far-famed warrior Chiefs with their bands in every kind of mood, but never saw one who had such absolute authority or was as bold and ready to exercise it as that noble woman. She was truly a born leader whose mandate none dared dispute."

During the course of the winter, two more parties of Indians descended on the fort and made trouble, and both times the white men fully expected to be murdered on the spot. They were completely at the savages' mercy, for most of them were so weak and emaciated that they could hardly walk. Campbell's feelings towards McPherson, who, while living comfortably at Fort Simpson, had refused to give them enough food to live on, can well be imagined.

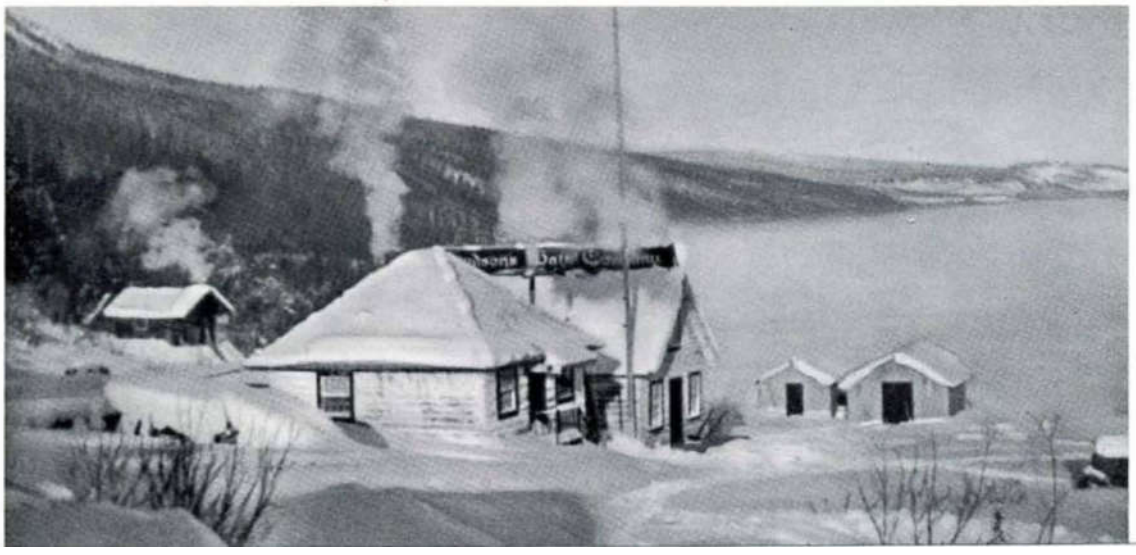
However, his courage and diplomacy in dealing with the wild tribes brought them through the winter with only one death, and in the spring they returned to Fort Halkett. Their last meal on leaving Dease Lake, May 8, 1839, consisted of their parchment windows and the netting of their snowshoes, boiled down to the consistency of glue.

By the September boats, Campbell received a letter from Governor Simpson. It contained the important news that the H B C had leased the whole of the Russian mainland territory up to Cape Spencer for ten years; that Fort Highfield was now being operated by the Company; and that therefore the interior could be settled from the coast more easily than from the Mackenzie. "Your services," wrote the Governor, "will now therefore be required to push our discoveries in the country situated on the Peel and Colville Rivers."

With that order, a whole new and exciting phase of his life opened for Robert Campbell.

The next instalment will deal with Campbell's discovery of the Pelly River and his adventures with the hostile Indians along its banks.

Dease Lake post to-day is equipped with two-way radio. Photo by Mrs. Robert Campbell (no relation).



A portrait of Paddy by Richard Finnie

PADDY GIBSON

by Alfred Copland

CHIEF Trader William "Paddy" Gibson, whose death occurred in an Arctic aeroplane accident on February 22, was a northerner of the finest type—a man of courage and resource, inured to the hardships of the trail, cool and untroubled, and although none more than he loved the companionship of friends, yet capable of living contentedly in solitude with his books and his thoughts.

By training and temperament he was well suited to northern work, and willingly accepted the hazards and inconveniences that he had to contend with during the eastward development of the Western Arctic District as far as King William Land. In 1915, he had enlisted—though only seventeen—with the R.A.M.C. He served with that corps in France until the end of the war and during the subsequent occupation of the German Rhineland. On returning to Ireland in 1919, he joined the famous Royal Irish Constabulary, as his father had done before him, and remained with them throughout a very troubled year.

But wider fields called him, and in 1920 he came out to Canada, where he enlisted with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Volunteering for northern service, he was posted to Herschel Island, and later saw service with other Western Arctic detachments. After completing five years with the R.C.M.P., he obtained his discharge, and entered the Hudson's Bay Company.

In King William Land he was made manager of the new post at Gjoa Haven, where Amundsen had wintered, and in 1934 he was appointed inspector of the Western Arctic District, carrying out periodic inspections as far west as Herschel Island.

The historic background of King William Land fired his imagination, and the unknown fate of Franklin's expedition became for Paddy an engrossing subject. Every available publication touching on the fate of the expedition, or the fruitless search in the Arctic wilderness for any trace of the lost explorers that might provide a clue, he avidly read and carefully studied. His research work in the Arctic field resulted in the discovery of the grim remains of several members of the expedition, and his finds were authenticated by the British Admiralty. The results of his investigations appeared under his name in *The Beaver*, and full recognition of his labours came when he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

His extensive travels throughout the Arctic and his intimate knowledge of conditions earned him recognition as a leading authority on all Arctic matters. As one of the central characters in Vicomte de Poncins' fine work, *Kabloona*, Paddy achieved a measure of fame. With that licence which is the prerogative of a successful writer, de Poncins' characterization unwittingly distorted many fine qualities in Paddy's character. This was not well received by northerners, but none knew better the character and sterling qualities of his host, and close personal friend through the long winter months, than Gontran de Poncins. His tribute to Paddy's memory is magnificent and sincere.

Throughout his entire service with the Company's Fur Trade Department, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, he enjoyed a popularity with the missionaries of both denominations that was unequalled. His hospitality was boundless, and trail-weary travellers were always assured of a home-like welcome at "Paddy's place," where they could relax and share the well ordered routine of his life and his interesting conversation.

As an Arctic traveller Paddy had few equals. On the trail he was indefatigable, and his long, hard trips were so well organized that never did we hear of him suffering undue privations from some oversight, even if bad weather interrupted his schedules. He leaves a record of journeys that is the envy of every northerner. In every method of Arctic travel he was a pioneer.

Among the scores of fine tributes that will be paid to Paddy's memory, none will be more eloquent or sincere than the quiet gratitude of his many Eskimo friends. With that quick perception which is nature's gift to them, they made a true appraisal of his qualities, and accepted him as a man of outstanding character to whom they could bring their troubles and in return receive kindly advice. His complete understanding of Eskimo mentality and of the many difficulties of their lives won for him their respect and friendship, and his loss will be mourned in all the villages along the Arctic Coast. He had a tremendous respect for the Eskimos, admired their ability to overcome physical discomforts and survive in their country, and was a keen student of their history.

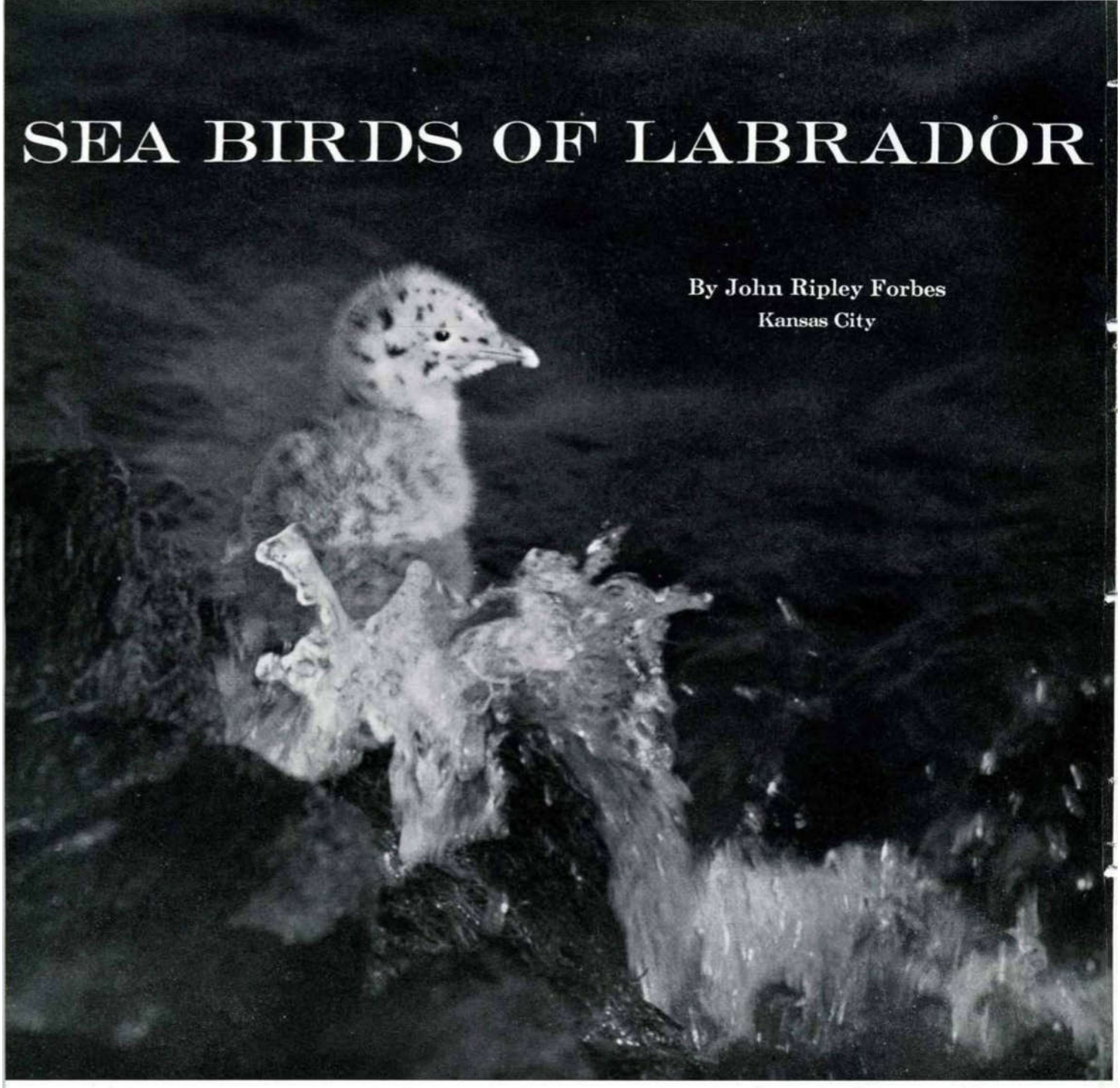
Nothing delighted him more than to spend a few hours with friends who were interested in the welfare of the Eskimo, and his countless anecdotes showed a strong sense of humour and a keen observation. At the time of his death he was making a collection of Eskimo folk-songs, with translations, which might have been a valuable contribution to the present meagre collection. One of them is published in this issue.

Of a retiring disposition, his versatile pen amply compensated for his natural reticence, and in his passing *The Beaver* has lost one of its ablest contributors. Needless to say, his loss to the Hudson's Bay Company is a great one.

To those of us who knew him well his death came as a severe shock; but the memory of his many kindnesses, and pleasant hours spent with him in the far north, will live on.

SEA BIRDS OF LABRADOR

By John Ripley Forbes
Kansas City



Young Glaucous Gull. Lorene Squire.

IT was my good fortune to accompany Commander Donald B. MacMillan on his sixteenth Arctic expedition aboard the *Gertrude L. Thebaud* as ornithological collector. Most of our time was spent in Labrador, but we went as far north as the Arctic circle in the region of Cumberland Sound. Throughout the trip I made a very extensive study of the birds of that region.

We found ourselves in an ornithological sanctuary as soon as our ship approached the Straits of Belle Isle, and the rugged coasts of Labrador hove into sight. As we moved through the straits, we came upon great numbers of *Atlantic Puffin*. When we approached, some of these birds, paddling around in the path of our vessel, would look about nervously. Not until we were almost on top of them would they spatter across the water as though unwilling or unable to take flight. They would raise themselves in an amusing manner high in the water, and with fast-beating wings take off into the air except for the tail, feet and wing tips, which hit the wavelets as the bird scudded away, only to drop back into the water when out of danger.

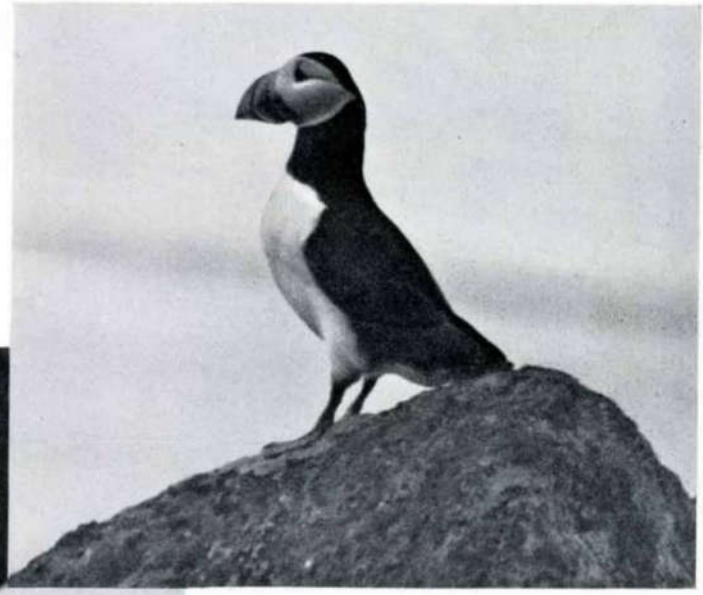
They have short narrow wings, but during their rapid flight often zig-zag. When they launch themselves from a cliff, their heads are bent down, wings raised as their webbed feet are spread out behind; frequently they make a fine whirring sweep before they alight with a splash in the sea. Their wings are used with ease under water when fishing.

The most prominent feature of the puffin is his brilliant red parrot-like bill. It is fascinating to watch one of these birds fishing. He takes up one fish after another in his laterally compressed bill until he is holding perhaps five, the tongue being used to hold the captives firm as the beak is opened to add others. As the visitor to the puffin's nest will testify, the bill is also used to inflict serious wounds when the bird is cornered.

A puffin usually places her single egg in a burrow which is dug in the steep slopes or banks of the islands. The burrow, dug chiefly by the male with his bill and feet, is carried inward, downward and upward for about an arm's length or more, and at the end of it may be found a nest constructed of dead grass and a few feathers. During nesting these birds often come from their burrows to relax their cramped muscles and get a breath of fresh air or to see what's going on. One could easily imagine them yawning and complaining of the tiresomeness of family duties as they stood very erect, stretching themselves and fluttering their wings.

We regretted not being able to spend more time with this comical looking bird, a true Mr. Punch of the bird kingdom. To add to his clownish appearance, he has a deep voice, "full of the deepest feeling," and capable of harsh croakings.

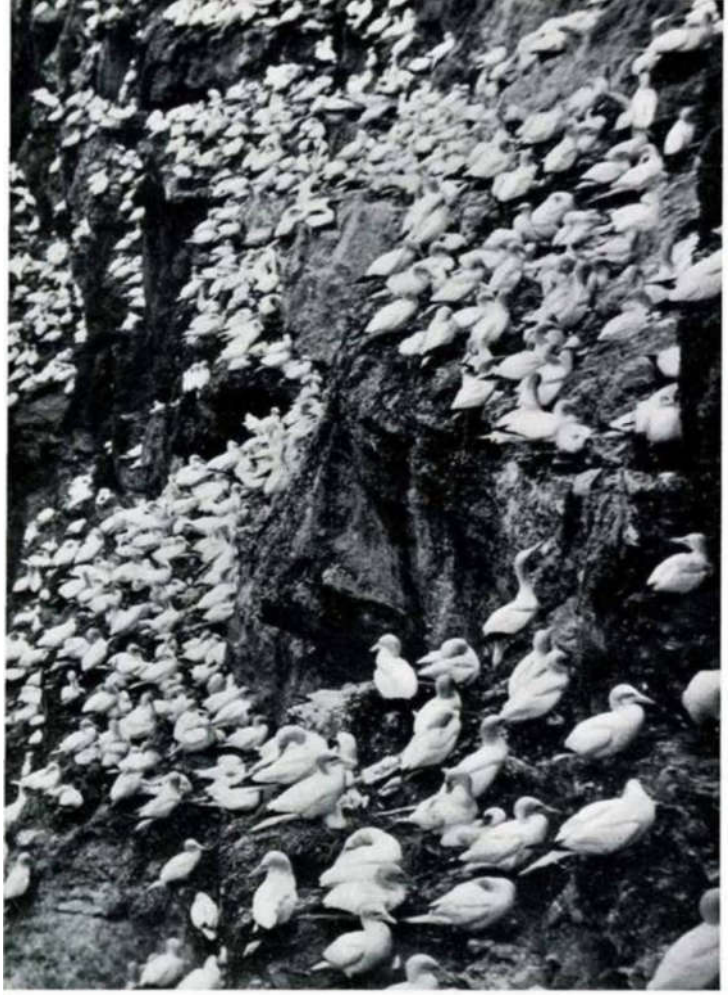
Before long, a *Gannet* was sighted flying over one of the rugged islands near our ship. These magnificent ocean dwellers are not true ocean birds, their distribution being largely regulated by fish confined to the off-shore zone. They do, however, travel hundreds of miles from their nests for a day's fishing, and occasionally find themselves long distances from land, having spent the night sleeping comfortably on the water. They are large white birds with black tipped wings and are twice the size of the herring gull. Dusky coloured young were also seen flying about looking for



Above: Puffin profile.

PHOTOS BY A. A. ALLEN.

Left: Puffin full-face and egg. The aggrieved expression is habitual.



Thousands of gannet nest on the rocky cliffs off the Newfoundland coast. ALFRED O. GROSS.

food. As we watched, one of the adults rose to a fair height, closed its pinions and dropped like an arrow into the sea, sending up a fountain of spray from five to eight feet in height. In a moment he had reappeared with a fish in his bill.

These birds breed along the coast of northeastern America where, on Bird Rock and Bonaventure Island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, are two of the best known colonies. In 1932 Bonaventure had 6,000 pairs breeding at this one colony.

The birds nest so closely together, it seems nothing short of a miracle that both eggs and young are not crushed on the rocks below every time the parents move about. The gannet colony on Bird Rock well illustrates the fact that these birds cover every possible section of territory. As a vessel nears the rock, the sides of that huge mass can be seen literally covered with birds, their white bodies making a striking contrast against the dark rock; and the air is constantly filled with birds coming and going. In climbing about to study the colonies, one must step about with great care lest he tread upon a bird or an egg.

A gannet colony usually has an unpleasant stench as a result of rather over-abundant food lying about the nests. Gannets feed upon surface-swimming fish and are therefore dependent for their food supply on the weather. When stormy weather is prevalent the fish seek greater depths. Should a gale continue three or four days, the birds would be without food during that period. It is safe to say that frequent storms at sea have made the gannet, on good days, store up a reserve food supply which is most evident on a visit to their nesting colonies. But although the gannet is accused by fishing interests of doing considerable damage, its harmful effects have been much overestimated.

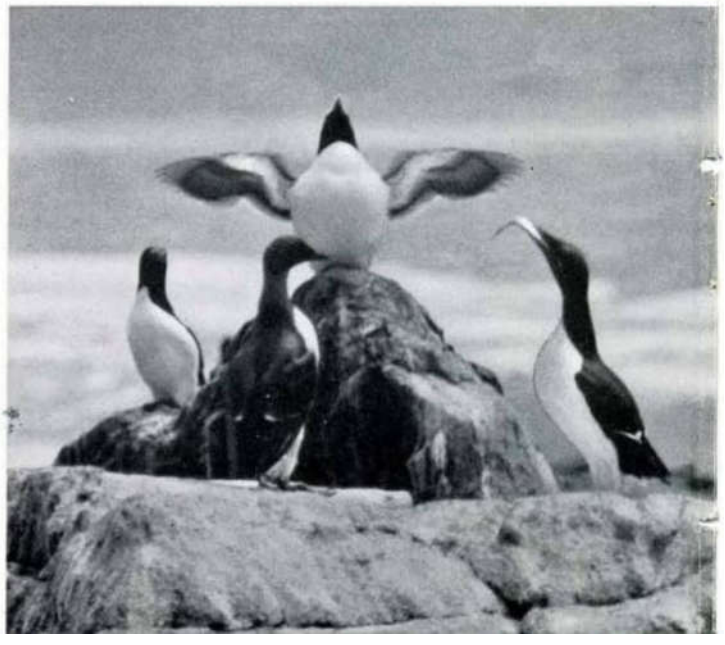
One of the most beautiful sights on our trip was to see these majestic birds sailing about after fish just before a coming storm, their bodies gleaming white against the dark storm clouds.

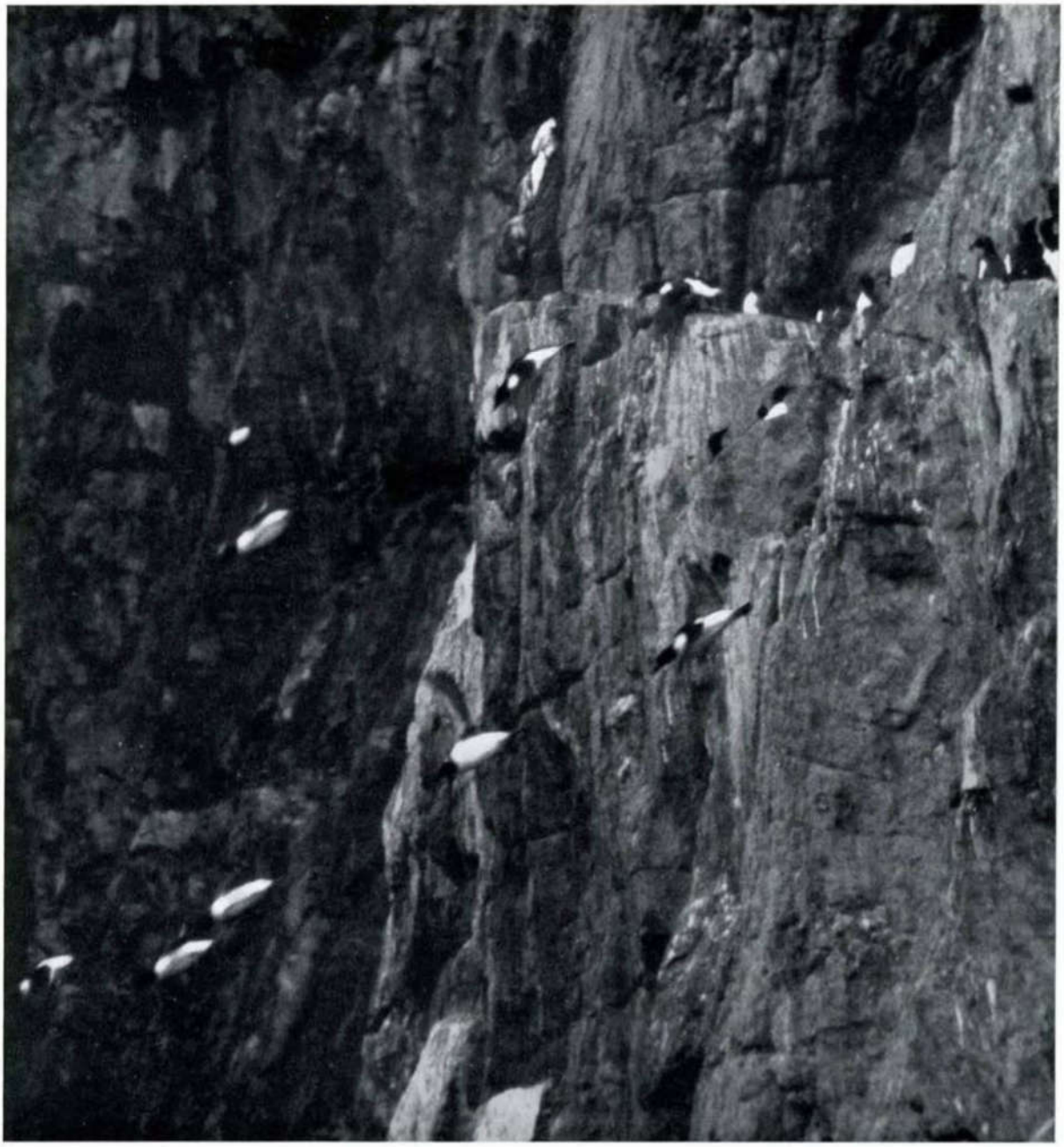
The common *Murre*, like other sea birds, has been reduced to a very small remnant of its former number by the foolish slaughter and plunder which many people of Canada and the United States have indulged in, ever since the early settlement of the country. The murre breeds on islands and coasts of the north Atlantic from southern Greenland to Newfoundland, and it winters along the Maine coast. One ornithologist, speaking of a large colony on Sanders Island where there are millions of birds, says that "The noise they make is appalling, and when they leave the island cliffs at the sound of a gun, the rush of wings sounds like a passing tornado."

With uncanny accuracy, the bird flies in and alights on its egg regardless of the countless numbers all about. A murre does not sit upon its single egg like most birds, but stands erect over it like a penguin and probes it into place with its bill. A single egg, slightly flattened on the sides and pointed toward the end is laid on the bare rock with no sort of a nest whatever; but no nest is needed, for this remarkable egg, due to its shape, just spins about in a circle if disturbed or blown by the wind and remains on the nesting ledge. Many of the eggs show a great variation in colouring and marking, and a murre apartment house often presents a rather colourful scene.

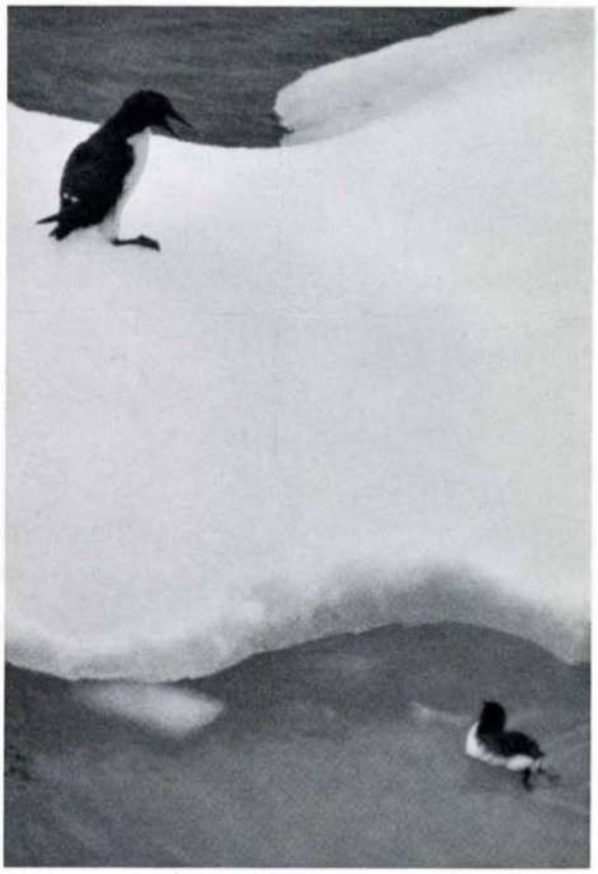
The *Black Guillemot* is very common along the Labrador coast and was seen on every day of our six thousand mile cruise. This guillemot nests in the most inaccessible locations imaginable. As we sailed past small rocky islands the birds would fly out from the cliffs, circle about and alight on the water nearby. They nest in crevices among the rocks, most of their nests being very hard, if not impossible, to reach; in the cavity the bird lays two greenish eggs on the ground or rocks. We found a number of these birds which exhibited a remarkable fortitude in the defence of their young. On one occasion when the adult would

"I'm the king of the castle!" Atlantic murres at breakfast. ALFRED O. GROSS.

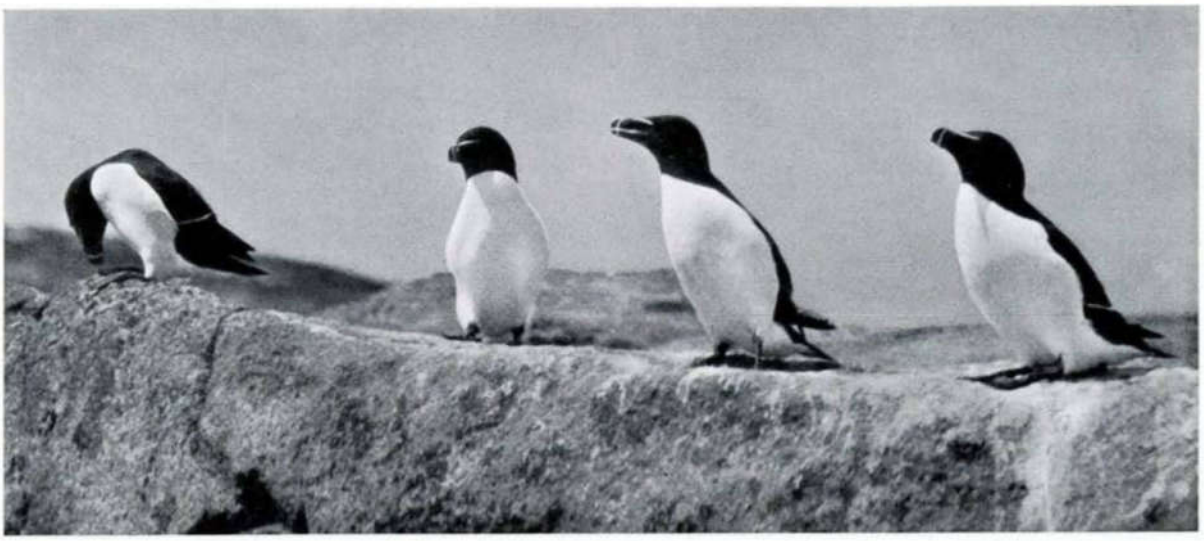




Above: Like a squadron of dive bombers going into action, the murres shoot out from the rock ledges into thin air with short wings outstretched. Not until they gather speed can they start flying. LORENE SQUIRE.
Below: The pointed egg of the murre is clearly shown in this picture by Dr. Alfred O. Gross of the 1937 Macmillan Arctic Expedition.



ARCTIC COMEDY. 1, As the ship approaches, Mother Murre tries to lead her chick away from danger by hopping up on to the ice pan. 2, "Come on, Junior. Make it snappy!" 3, "Very well, then, if you won't come, I'll go without you." 4, "Ma-a-a! Wait for me!" PHOTOS BY LORENE SQUIRE FROM THE "NASCOPIE."



Razor-billed auks. ALFRED O. GROSS.

not leave its nest, we were able to reach into a crevice in the rock and remove and band it. Upon being banded it returned to its eggs, none the worse for this experience. Another time several members of our expedition, while on a field trip, brought back to the ship two downy young and their parent. They had removed the young from their nest, but the parent bird had refused to be driven away and allowed herself to be captured and brought back to the vessel with the young rather than desert them. Such devotion to the young birds is most remarkable, for the adult bird could easily have escaped.

These sea pigeons or black guillemots are gregarious, and large flocks of them may be seen floating on the water in raft-like formation, or gathered atop the cliffs above their homes. They look like small ducks, and during the summer are coal black with a very prominent white wing patch, while their feet and mouth are a brilliant red.

Leaving the Straits of Belle Isle behind, we entered our first anchorage at Forteau Bay, where we disturbed a flock of some one hundred *White-winged Scoters* feeding at the end of the bay.

The following day we headed northward toward Battle Harbour and found ourselves accompanied by a number of very interesting sea birds. The greater and sooty *Shearwaters* made our acquaintance as they followed the *Thebaud* during the next five days.

The sight of our first ice-berg told us we were nearing Battle Harbour, Labrador settlement, famous for its bergs. Before long we sighted many others, some especially large in size. Several bergs were covered with *Kittiwakes* which had found this icy perch a convenient place to rest in the middle of their fishing grounds. The kittiwake is known as an off-shore gull, for it is usually seen far out at sea and seldom near harbours, as is our common herring gull.

We also made the acquaintance of the *Razor-billed Auk* at this time—a bird which resembled in the distance one of the murre and differs chiefly by its heavier head and compressed hooked bill, which is crossed by a conspicuous white streak. Another field mark very well seen at close range, when the bird is resting on the water, is its upright tail. The auk nests in large colonies, laying its single egg on the bare rock, and you can see the birds sitting on their eggs as you pass under the ledges in a boat. They will line up in most amusing fashion on top of the cliffs as they watch the approach of a visitor. They are full of curiosity, and with little effort can be made to fly very close to you as your boat goes by their rocky island.

These auks feed upon small fish, crustacea which they obtain from the water or at the bottom of the ocean, and they are highly skilled at diving to great depths and swimming long distances under water. In these underwater actions the wings are used similarly to those of the guillemots.

As we neared Hopedale, our escort of shearwaters left us, and we saw considerable numbers of American *Eider Ducks*, which until this time had been seen only in occasional small numbers. The eider duck, from whose nest comes "eider down" used for many commercial purposes, is the most common duck along the Labrador coast. It plucks the down from its breast to build its nest, and it is from this source that we obtain eider down. The male bird is very colourful with its black and white contrasting plumage and is easily distinguished from other ducks, for his colour pattern reverses that found in most others.

Quite by accident, while pursuing some other birds, I found an eider nest which was camouflaged with a high degree of perfection. Had I not nearly stepped on the tail feathers of the mother duck as she sat on her eggs, and made her leave so suddenly that she was unable to cover her nest completely, I doubt if I would have found her secret. The nest was placed in a bed of reindeer moss, and the female had plucked bits of moss from nearby and sprinkled it here and there throughout the eider down. The result was that the entire nest when covered blended so perfectly into its surroundings that only the sharpest eyes could have found it.

The female eider, before leaving her eggs, takes the down of the nest and pulls it as a protecting blanket over the eggs. This not only keeps the eggs warm in her absence but also, more important, covers them so that nobody would have any idea there was a nest in that spot.

Leaving Hopedale, we got under way for Nain, which we found to be the most picturesque of the Hudson's Bay posts and Moravian Mission stations

Arctic Tern, the bird that holds the record for long distance migration. LORENE SQUIRE.

in Labrador. We began to see many *Glaucous Gulls* as we moved farther northward. These gulls are found only in the northern and Arctic regions and are very beautiful. They are almost entirely white.

From Nain, the *Thebaud* made her way with great caution through the ice packed waters toward Cape Chidley as we prepared to leave Labrador behind and head northward past the Button Islands in the direction of Baffin Island. As we neared Cape Chidley, we saw thousands of *Fulmar* circling about the swift-moving waters of the cape, intent only upon their feeding.

These are most interesting and deserve the title of a pelagic bird. Except at nesting season, this bird dwells entirely upon the open sea and keeps away from all land. The fulmar is found in two colour phases—pearl grey and white, of which the grey is the more common. We saw many in both colours as they passed about us, many of them so close that it was almost possible to touch them.

After nesting is finished, the fulmar scatter far and wide over the grey wastes of the North Atlantic Ocean, for the great open sea is their home except during the breeding season. This magnificent sea bird knows no storm or wave too stiff to brave, and may be found sailing about on sturdy wings or resting on the water, regardless of how high the sea may be running.

It feeds upon mollusks, other sea forms and all types of animal garbage. Its young are fed with oil by regurgitation. In large colonies they breed on the cliffs of Arctic islands and mountains; the nest is a small excavation in the soil or under some sea cliff occasionally lined with dry grass. Only one egg is laid. One of the most famous nesting sites is St. Kilda in the Outer Hebrides. Here the natives have for ages found these birds one of their chief sources of food. Large numbers of them are taken each year for their oil, which is used for commercial purposes. The natives also use the feathers and down of the bird, while meat and eggs serve as food. The yellow fulmar oil is one of the island's chief products. E. H. Forbush, former ornithologist for the State of Massachusetts, stated that in one month alone some 20,000 fledglings were taken.

Many visitors to the famous St. Kilda Islands have remarked on the tremendous number of birds. One writer when alarmed remarked, "It seemed as though the cliffs were dissolving into birds." I can well appreciate his feeling when I recall the thousands that circled about the swift moving waters of Cape Chidley. The entire region seemed to be filled with grey and white bodies as they glided and soared tirelessly about on seemingly stiff blunt-looking wings.

Another bird of the Arctic is undisputed king of long distance—the graceful *Arctic Tern*. The stupendous migration of this bird is of special interest, not only because of the distance it travels, but also because of its route, which leads it to both the new and old worlds. It nests at least as far north as the most northern Eskimos, and arrives there for the summer, the period of the midnight sun. The tern flies back to its Antarctic home for the southern summer. In all, there are about eight months of its year during which it has a twenty-four hour span of daylight, and for the rest of the four months it has more day than darkness. Between its most northerly and most southerly territory, it covers a round trip of 25,000 miles, crossing the Atlantic and covering both old world and new en route.

On the way home our expedition stopped just long enough at the Turnevick Islands to band some fifty of these terns. Most of the young were able to fly and we captured only some of the late nesters.

We returned to Gloucester, Massachusetts, two and a half months after setting out, after a six thousand mile voyage full of interest and thrills.

VOYAGEUR SONGS

by Marius Barbeau

THE most celebrated voyageur canoe, in the whole history of the Hudson's Bay Company, undoubtedly was the *canot du gouverneur*, the governor's canoe, also called *canot allege*—unburdened or express canoe. This canoe was once well described by a learned old-world explorer, J. G. Kohl, in his *Kitchi-gami*, or *Wanderings round Lake Superior* (1860). Sir George Simpson, the governor, whose headquarters were at Lachine near Montreal, made annual inspection trips through a portion of the Company's immense domains. "The great gentleman," Kohl writes, was "always in a terrible hurry. . . . His canoe is very large and long, remarkably pretty, and of light build. . . . He has a corps of twenty or twenty-four paddlers with him. They are powerful, hardy and experienced voyageurs: *Des hommes choisis! les plus beaux chanteurs du monde!*—picked men, the finest singers in the world! They sing the merriest songs, and work *a l'aviron* (at the paddle) actively the whole day."

If Governor Simpson chose the largest and lightest canoe, and the best paddlers and singers to man his canoe for his own conveyance over the rivers and great lakes east and west, he was not indulging a mere whim, but verily training every nerve for speed and efficiency.

The building of a large "express" canoe of birch bark, at Lachine or L'Assomption, required experience and craftsmanship, no less than the exertions of long journeys called for skill, boldness, good voices and unflagging endurance, in the canoe-men. "In such quick voyages," Kohl adds, "the paddling is very lively, and the song, no less." The voyageurs "consider singing as necessary to give men mental strength for bodily exertion. Hence they spoke to me of *chansons de canot allege*, and gave me two or three tunes for illustrations. They were remarkably long."

The very length of this vocal accompaniment to labour was its "principal virtue," as Kohl puts it, though not the only one, for many of the songs were beautiful and inspiring, as other leading personalities and explorers have testified, among them the poet Moore, de la Rochefoucault, Talbot, de Maufras, MacTaggart and Ballantyne. The paddling songs, to be really useful, had to last as long as possible, with their narrative detailed in a number of verses, each of which was followed by a refrain consisting of several lines.

The singers, again to use Kohl's observation at first hand, "pause upon every idea, repeat it with a certain degree of admiration, and break off into musical refrains and repetitions. Their song is like the murmur of the river itself. It seems endless. The singers are satisfied when they have found some pleasantly-sounding words which they can adapt to a favourite melody or a refrain giving a good turn to the paddling. The refrain and its constant repetition occupy so much time and place that the story itself in the song at length appears to be a mere makeweight. . . . After each short line comes the refrain, and the story twines itself along like a slender creeping-plant."

These vocal compositions were first of all working songs. Their function consisted in marking the motion of the many paddles in the water and sustaining the energy of the canoemen throughout their tiring journeys in the wilderness. And it seems that, while travelling, they never stopped singing. Picking up the paddle, so de la Rochefoucault says about 1803, they picked up a song with it. Three decades later, in 1832, Captain Back, on his way to the Arctic, noted down that his voyageurs "roared out" to their companions, who had stopped at a shrine for a prayer, to get on, and, as if one man, altogether they "paddled away to the merry tune of a lively canoe song."

As early as 1795, Isaac Weld, in his *Travels* on the upper St. Lawrence and Lake Huron, insists that the songs served to mark the motion of the paddles in unison, just as heave-away chanties did for sailors raising the anchor or hoisting the sails. "Where there is a gentle current, the Canadians will work at the paddle for many hours without intermission. They thought it no hardship to be kept working, in this instance, the whole night long. They plied as vigorously as if they had just set out, singing merrily the whole time. These men in general have a good ear for music. They use one very favourite paddling song, called the 'rowing duet,' which, as they sing it, marks time to each stroke of the paddle. Indeed, when rowing in smooth water, their paddles beat the time of most of the airs they sing."

Not only did the length and usefulness of the songs, but also their genuine musical quality, impress the early chroniclers. Thus many years after Moore, the Irish poet, had claimed to have received from some of the canoe songs, in a grandiose setting, a greater pleasure than the masters of music had ever given him, John MacTaggart, in his *Three Years in Canada* (1829), relates: "Many of their canoe-songs are exquisite; more particularly the *air* they give them. . . . One must be in a canoe with a dozen hearty paddlers, the lake pure, the weather fine, and the rapids past, before their influence can be powerfully felt. Music and songs I have revelled in all my days, and must own that the *chansons de voyageurs* have delighted me above all others, excepting those of Scotland. . . ."

R. M. Ballantyne, in *Hudson's Bay*, writes in the same vein: "In these fairylike boats [birch-bark North Canoes painted on the bow and the stern], we swept swiftly over Playgreen Lake [near Norway House], the bright vermilion paddles gleaming in the sunshine and the woods echoing to the lively tune of *A la claire fontaine* sung by two crews in full chorus."

During the same voyage, "the canoe bounded merrily up the river, while the echoing woods and dells responded to the lilting air of *Rose Blanche* sung by the men as we swept round point after point and curve after curve of the noble river [the Winnipeg River].

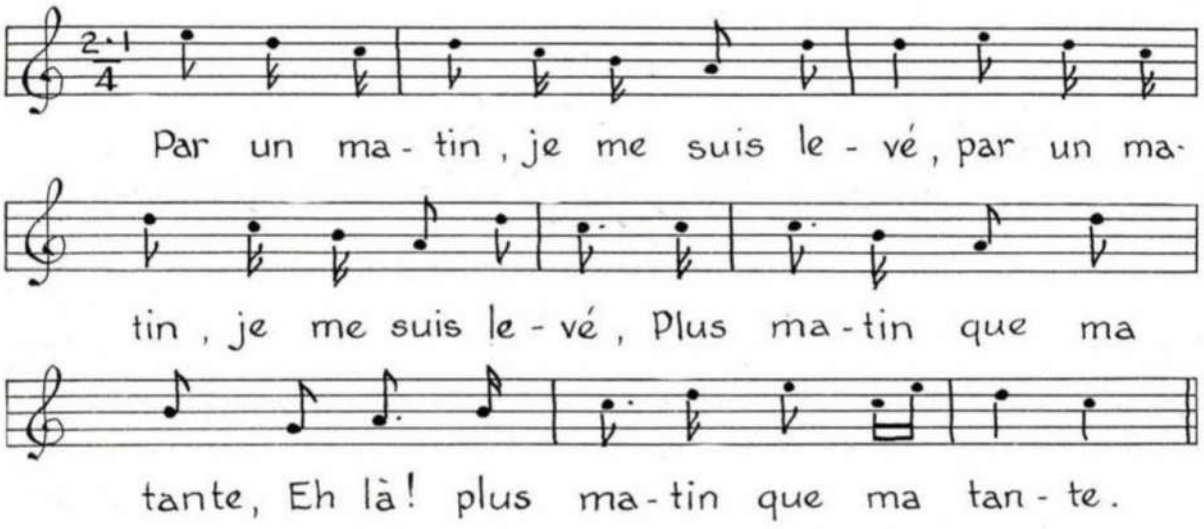
"I have seen four canoes sweep round a promontory, while at the same moment the wild romantic song of the voyageurs, as they plied their brisk paddles, struck upon my ear; and I have felt thrilling enthusiasm. . . . With hearts joyful at the happy termination of their trials and privations, they sang, with all the force of three hundred manly voices, one of their lively airs. The song rose and fell in the distance as it was borne lightly on the breeze, then, as they steadily approached, it swelled out in the rich tone of many a mellow voice, and burst at last into a long enthusiastic shout of joy. . . . Away we went, over the clear lake, singing *Rose Blanche* vociferously."

The two songs named by Ballantyne—*A la claire fontaine* and *La Rose blanche*—no doubt were among the most popular paddle songs or *chansons de canot allege*. They were not, as one might surmise, songs composed by the singers themselves or adapted to their own particular needs, but old French songs which had come across the seas from the motherland with their ancestors. They were two of the many masterpieces in the huge repertory which their memory, like a storehouse, preserved for their everyday use and comfort. When of this type, the songs of the voyageurs, therefore, were not exclusively their own, but belonged as well to other Canadians, habitants on the Laurentian farms and craftsmen in rural and small-town shops at Montreal and Quebec.

Here follows, for instance, the popular *Roses blanches* of Ballantyne, in which the narrative strung out "like a slender creeping-plant," runs through refrains and oft-repeated lines, first in solo then in chorus:

The meaning of the narrative, in brief, is:

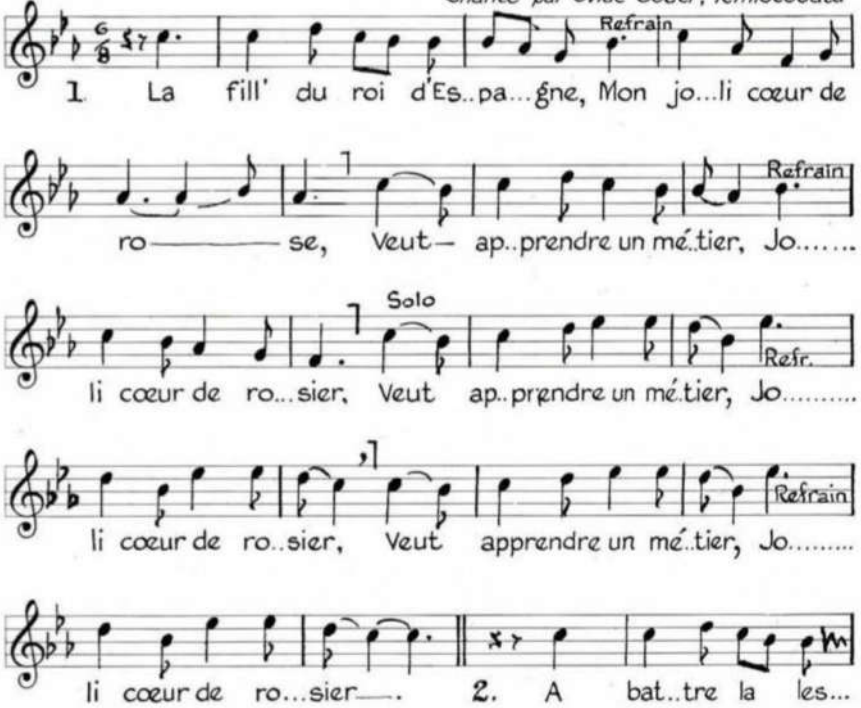
One morning she awoke at dawn.
Down the garden path she went
To gather roses white.
Holding the roses in his hand
She saw her love before her stand.
She asked him for the roses white.
He gave three to her with a bow;
She tripped on one, he knew not how.
O, mercy me! adown she fell;
She broke her leg, her knee as well.
Oh, bring to me a doctor, dear!
I fear that I shall swoon.
O doctor dear, of you I beg,
Whatever's happened to my leg?
The way to mend it I will tell:
Dew drops shall weave a magic spell,
In dew drops bathe it well,
Within a shining golden bowl.
That alone shall make it whole
With roses white adorn'd,
Three roses white adorning.

ROSES BLANCHES

Among the most popular canoe songs or *chansons d'aviron* were the still familiar *M'en revenant de la jolie Rochelle* (Coming back from pretty Rochelle), *Par derriere chez mon pere* (Behind my father's home), *C'est l'amour qui les prend* (Love overtakes them), *C'est l'aviron* (It's the paddle), *Trois beaux canards* (Three fine ducks), *J'ai fait faire un beau navire* (I had a pretty ship made for me), *Nanette, Le Rosier blanc* (The white rosebush)—quoted by Kohl, and some ballads with refrains of the type of *Prince Eugene, Le Prince d'Orange*, and *La Courte Paille* or Seven years on the sea.

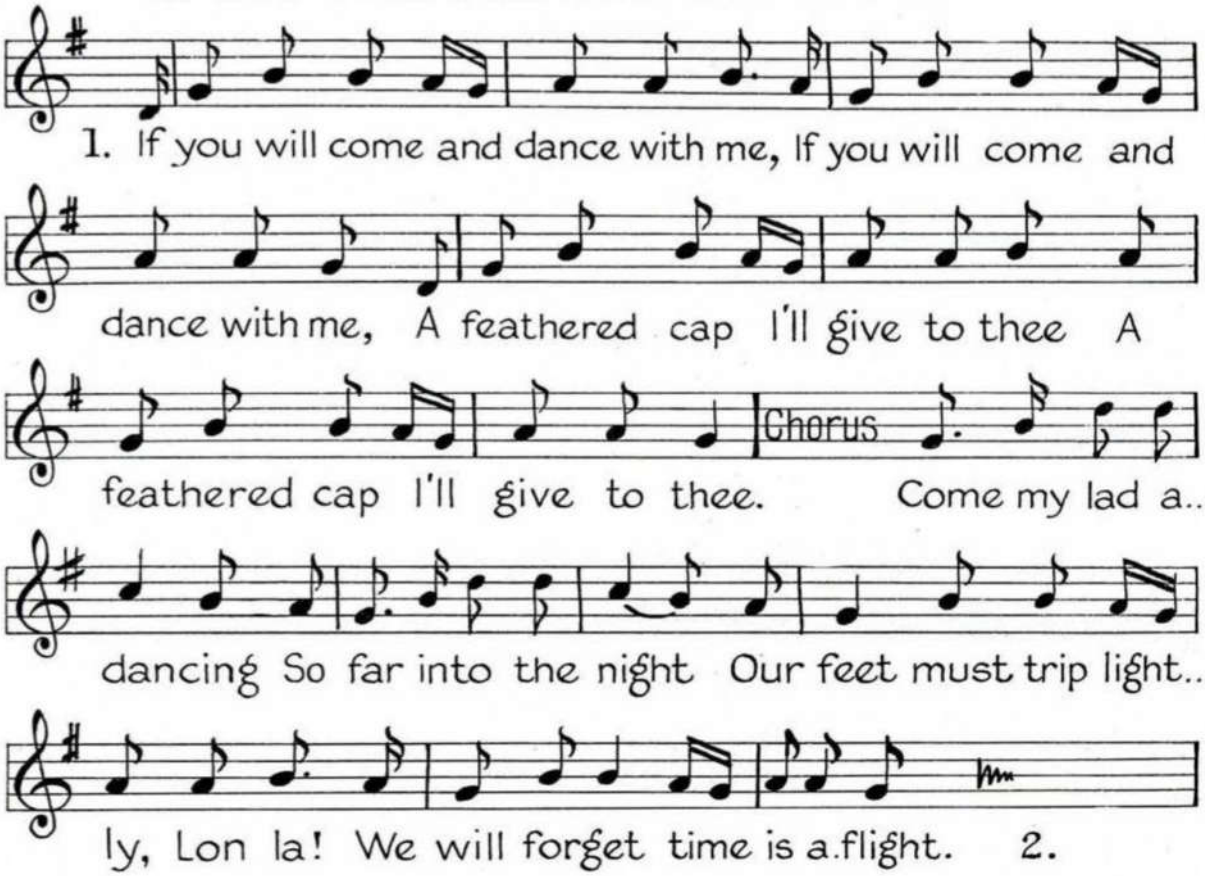
Another instance of this familiar type of paddling song is *L'anneau d'or a tombe* (The golden ring fell adown). In this song the daughter of the king of Spain is said to be beating the wash at the river's edge, when her golden ring slips from her finger and drops to the bottom of the stream. Her gallant suitor, seeing her plight, dives down three times; first he makes the ring clink, second he makes it jump, and thirdly he goes down to drown. His mother, glaring from an upper window upon the scene, laments his fate and deplores his chivalry with the words, "Must a son just for a girl be drowned?"

L'anneau d'or a tombé

Sketch by Arthur Lismer

Chanté par Ovide Souci, Témiscouata

Refrain
1. La fill' du roi d'Es..pa...gne, Mon jo...li cœur de
ro——— se, Veut— ap..prendre un mé..tier, Jo.....
Solo
li cœur de ro...sier, Veut ap..prendre un mé.tier, Jo.....
Refr.
li cœur de ro..sier, Veut apprendre un mé..tier, Jo.....
Refrain
li cœur de ro...sier—. 2. A bat..tre la les...

The folk-songs of the voyageurs, however, were not all of the same type—not all work or paddling songs. Countless others were purely lyrical and reminiscent, like love songs, drinking songs, parting songs. Not a few, along with fiddle tunes, were dancing songs, for evening revelry. *If you will come and dance with me* (here given with the English words for the first verse) is a good example of dance songs such as were used at the trading posts, whenever the voyageurs found a chance to break into lively dance steps.

IF YOU WILL COME AND DANCE WITH ME

1. If you will come and dance with me, If you will come and
dance with me, A feathered cap I'll give to thee A
feathered cap I'll give to thee. Chorus Come my lad a..
dancing So far into the night Our feet must trip light..
ly, Lon la! We will forget time is a.flight. 2.

Another variety of songs consisted in what is called *complaintes*, which are common in the French Canadian repertory. These are the equivalent of the British Come-all-ye's. In these songs, the explorer Kohl "discovered a deeper poetical feeling."

"Those *complaintes* are not thoroughly Canadian; they are a species of elegiac romances, well known in French literature. Still they are characteristic enough of the land and people. . . . Everywhere I heard them speak of their *complaintes*, and I believe that at least one half of their songs consists of these elegies. Indeed, it may be fairly asserted that their entire music and poetry have an undercurrent of elegy."

As Kohl rightly remarks, they were not all ancient. "They are often made about tragical events, especially shipwrecks and deadly accidents, which become widely known. One of the most famous of these commemorates the sad fate of Jean Cayeux, a voyageur of former times." Cadieux, as his name is usually pronounced, was a coureur-de-bois of the French period, on the Ottawa river. To shield his family, in a raid of the Iroquois on Calumet Island, he had met with death, but before dying he had dug his grave, and composed a *complainte*, in which he told the story of his last adventure. He was supposed to have engraved it with his blood on a slab of wood and pegged it on a tree for others to recover after his death.

"As such stories," Kohl goes on to say, "are common enough in a hard country like this, where every voyageur has been at least once in a position resembling that of Cayeux, and wolves and ravens have often passed him, anxious to pick his bones, it may be easily imagined with what heartfelt sympathy the voyageurs listen to such *complaintes*."

Among those familiar in the Northwest, a small proportion at least were of local origin and bore upon memorable events of the recent past. Some of the singers, particularly among the *Bois-Brules* or *Chicots*, were endowed with a gift for song-making, if not sheer improvisation. The *Bois-Brules* were half-breeds; or, at times, white men married to Indian women. This name, meaning "burnt wood" or "burnt stump" (*chicot*), had come to them from their tanned complexion, or from "the shades of colour that bronze the face of a mixed breed."

"I grant that the old French Voyageurs brought many a pretty song from France into these remote countries, and you may hear, on the Upper Mississippi and in the bays and wild rivers of Lake Superior, even at the present day (1860), an old chanson sung two hundred years ago in Normandy, but now forgotten there. But I am not speaking here of that class of songs. . . . I allude to the songs composed on the spot which are characteristic of the land and its inhabitants. The people paint, in them, their own daily adventures and the surrounding nature. Among these poetic productions, there is much that would make no great figure in a book, although it produces its good effect on the listener in actual life. . . . Generally they designate their own most peculiar songs as *chansons de voyageur*, and exclude from them the songs they have derived from France or elsewhere."

Among the best songs of this type are *Le six de mai, l'annee derniere*, and *Epouser le voyage*, both recorded at Tadoussac, from Edward Hovington (then 89 years old), a former servant of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Here is the first stanza of *Le six de mai* which, interpreted in English, runs like this:

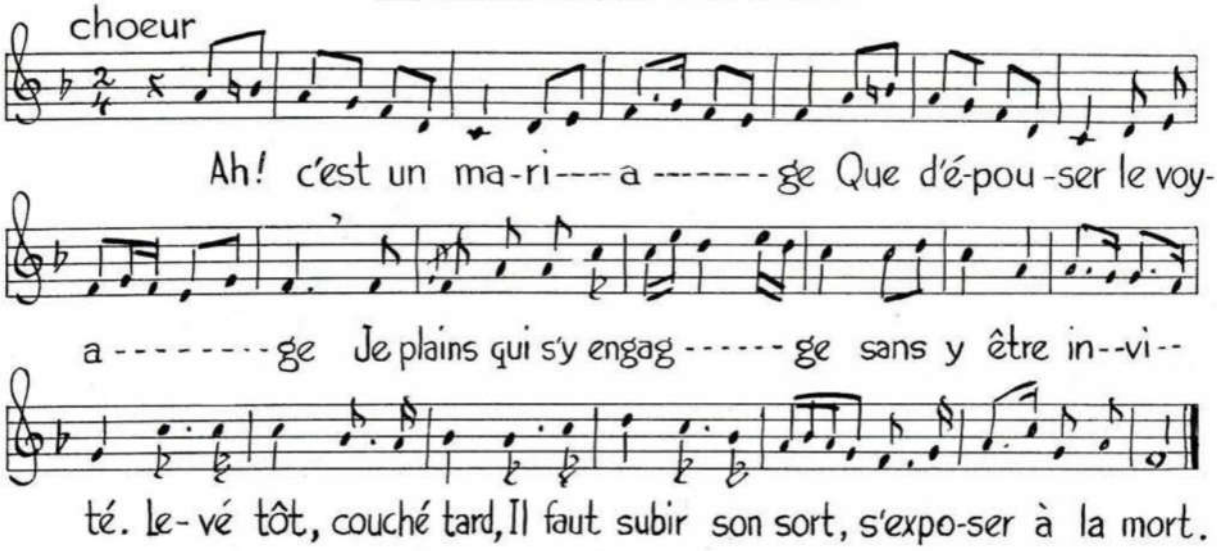
> The sixth of May, a year ago,
> 'Twas the day I went away
> On a long and distant voyage
> To the lands beyond the bay
> Where the woodland people stay.

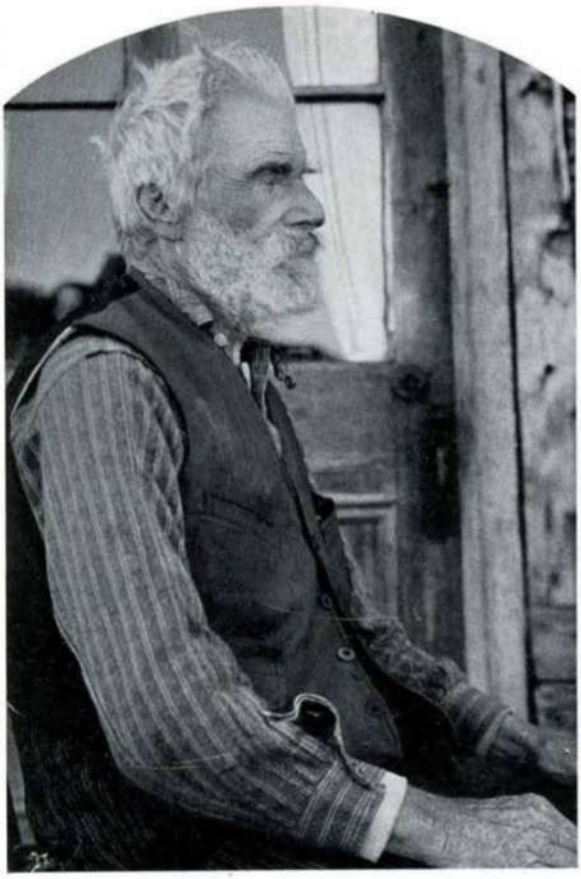
The refrain or chorus exclaims:

> O how long is the Winter!
> How slowly time passes by!
> Night and day my heart does sigh,
> Longing for the sweet Spring-time,
> The sweet and lovely Spring!
> For 'tis the Spring that will bring
> Joy to fond lovers pining
> For tenderness and cherishing . . .

Epouser le voyage is another of the elegiac songs of the Northwest, into which a nameless singer poured his soul. This lament, like the previous one, rests upon true inspiration and a fine melody.

Its lament is about the sufferings which the rivers and the trails bring to those who made them their own, first of all those who have not really the calling. The second stanza reaches lyrical heights:

EPOUSER LE VOYAGE

choeur
Ah! c'est un ma-ri---- a ------- ge Que d'é-pou-ser le voy-
a -------- ge Je plains qui s'y engag ------ ge sans y être in--vi--
té. le-vé tôt, couché tard, Il faut subir son sort, s'expo-ser à la mort.



Edward Hovington, singer of Tadoussac

(Chorus)
Dans le cours du voyage,
Exposé aux naufrages;
(Solo)
Le corps trempé dans l'eau,
Eveillé par les oiseaux,
Nous n'avons de repos
Ni le jour ni la nuit.
N'y a que de l'ennui. . . .

(During the voyage the canoe may be wrecked. Our bodies are drenched with water, we're awakened by the birds; nowhere can we rest, neither by day nor by night. There's naught but weariness.)

The voyageurs who were prompted by feeling into composing such songs remained nameless. Most of their wild lyrics were no sooner uttered than forgotten. The quality of the few that have come down to us bring regret for their disappearance, for they were the true Canadian folk-songs.

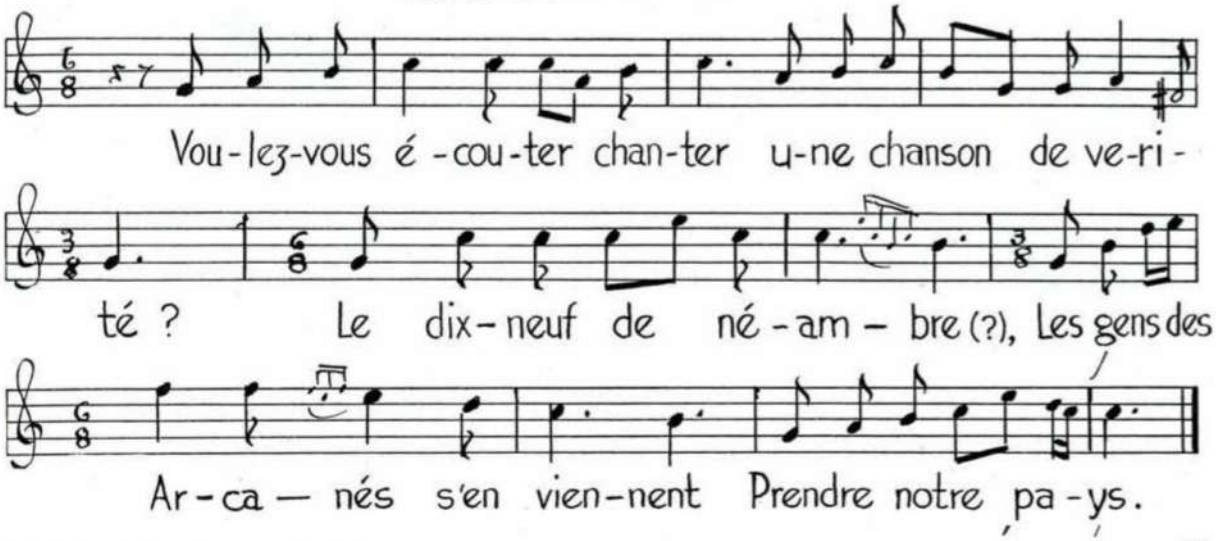
Pierre Falcon, the *chicot* or *bois-brule* of Assiniboia, is the only one of all the prairie bards that has left us his name and repute, also a few of his songs, like that of *Les Bois-brules* or the Battle of Seven Oaks. The melody of this song was sung by old Hovington at Tadoussac and recorded by him on the phonograph, in 1916, for the National Museum. It had come down to him from a singer whom he called a *bourgeois de la Compagnie d'Hudson*, whose name was Fortescue.

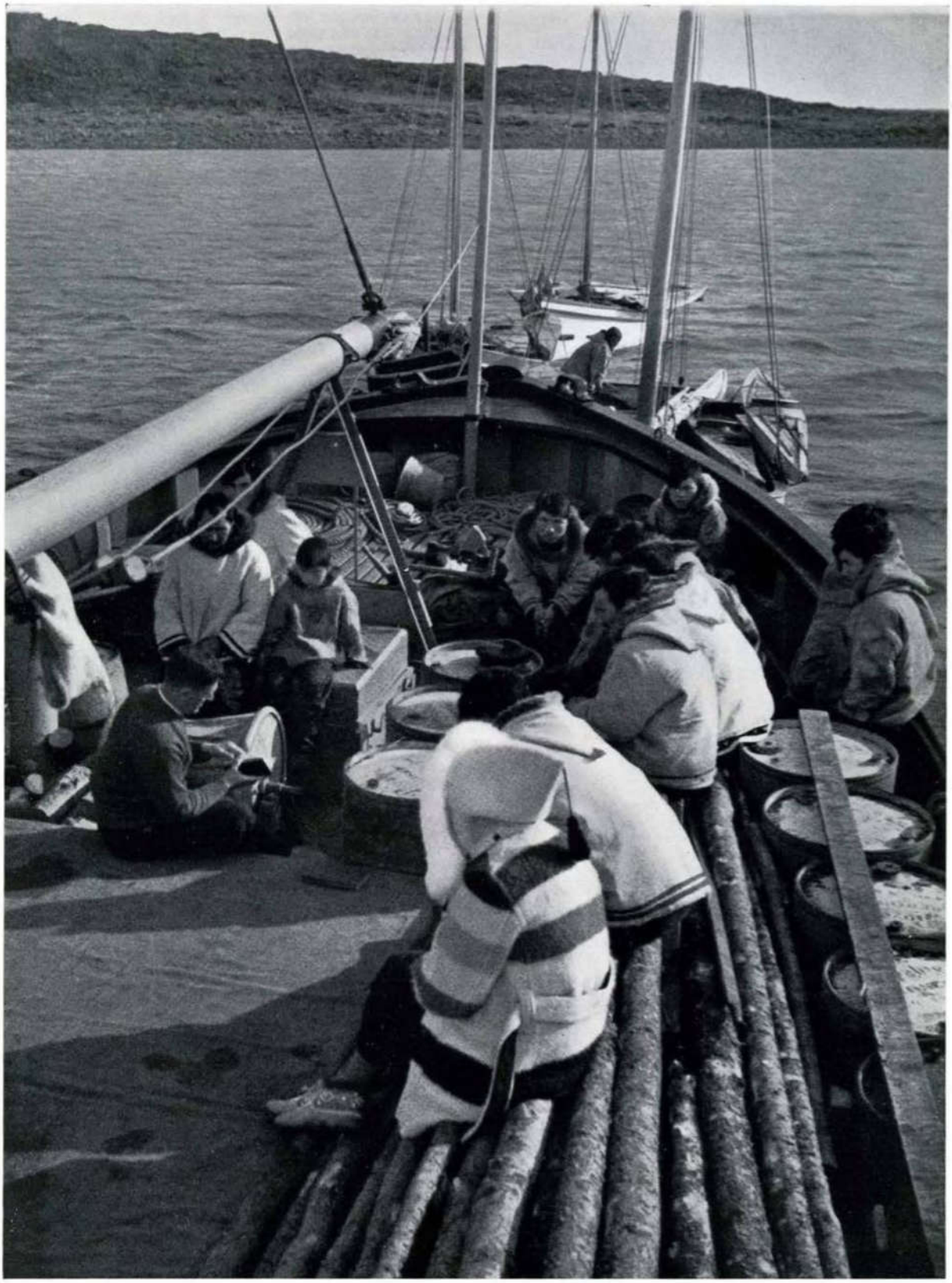
Of Pierre or "Pierriche" Falcon, Joseph James Hargrave, who first recorded the words of this song before 1871 (*Red River*), says: "Pierre Falcon, magistrate of Assiniboia, is an old and highly respectable member of the French half-breed population. [The song] was composed, I believe, the very day of the battle of Seven Oaks, and gives, I have no doubt, a truthful description of the light in which the author . . . regarded the appearance and intentions of Governor Semple and his followers. M. Falcon neither reads nor writes. The song was taken down from his own lips."

The version of the first stanza which Hargrave then gives differs considerably from that recorded by Hovington.

Voulez-vous ecouter chanter une chanson de verite?
Le dix-neuf de juin les Bois-brules sont arrives
Comme des braves guerriers.
En arrivant a la Grenouilliere
Nous avons fait trois prisonniers
Des Orcanais! [Orkneymen]. *Ils sont ici pour piller notre pays.*

Hovington, French-speaking, who still enjoyed a splendid voice despite his years, had learned not a few of his *chansons de voyageur* from Miss Barnston, the daughter of the chief trader there, about whom an article appeared in *The Beaver* last December.

LES BOIS-BRULES

Vou-lez-vous é-cou-ter chan-ter u-ne chanson de ve-ri-
té ? Le dix-neuf de né-am-bre (?), Les gens des
Ar-ca-nés s'en vien-nent Prendre notre pa-ys.



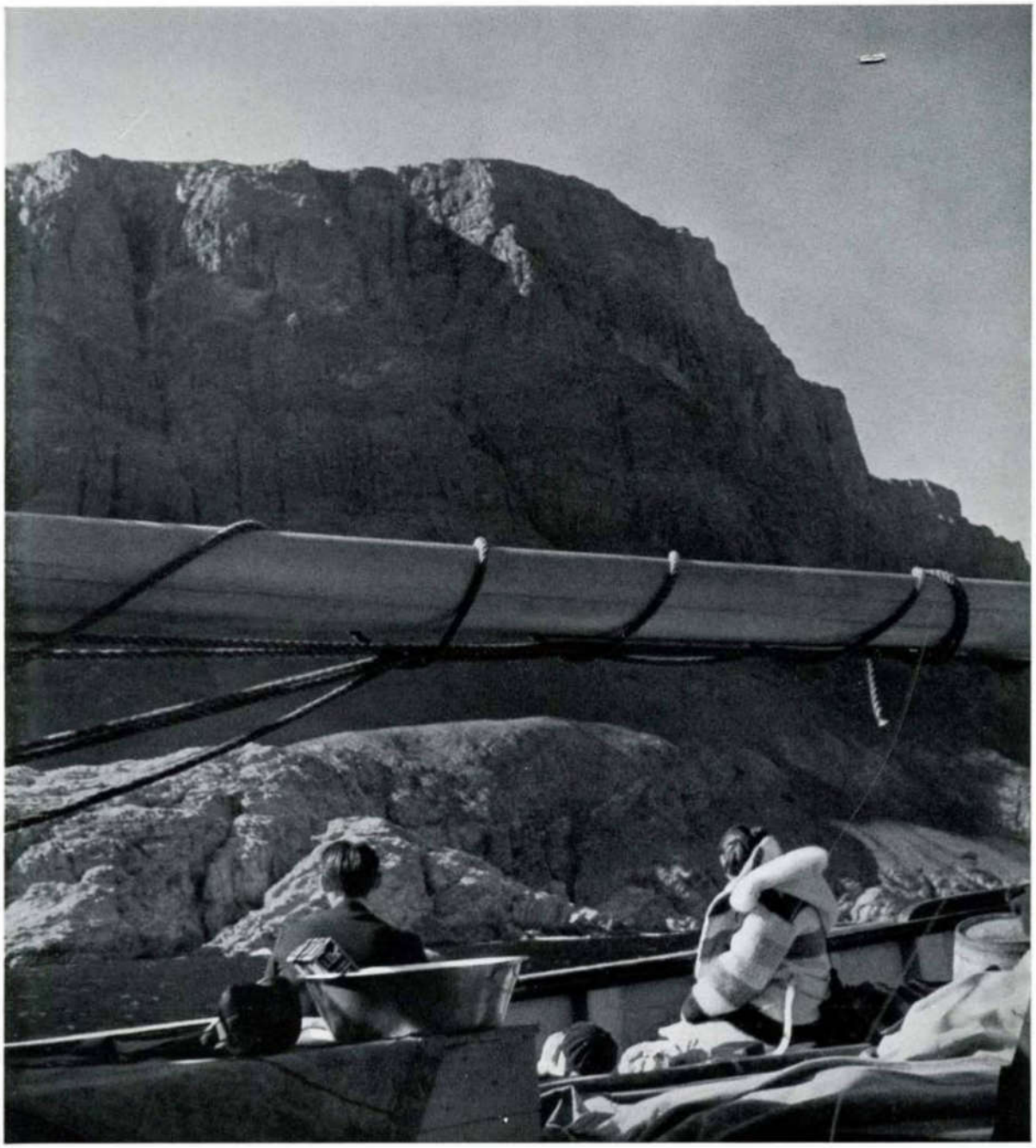
Church service is conducted by Rev. R. W. Wenham on board the "Fort Ross" at Payne Bay. Mrs. Wenham finds the weather cool enough for a blanket coat.

The "Fort Ross," southward bound, passes Cape Chidley, off the northernmost point of Labrador. Captain Jim Dawe on the bridge.

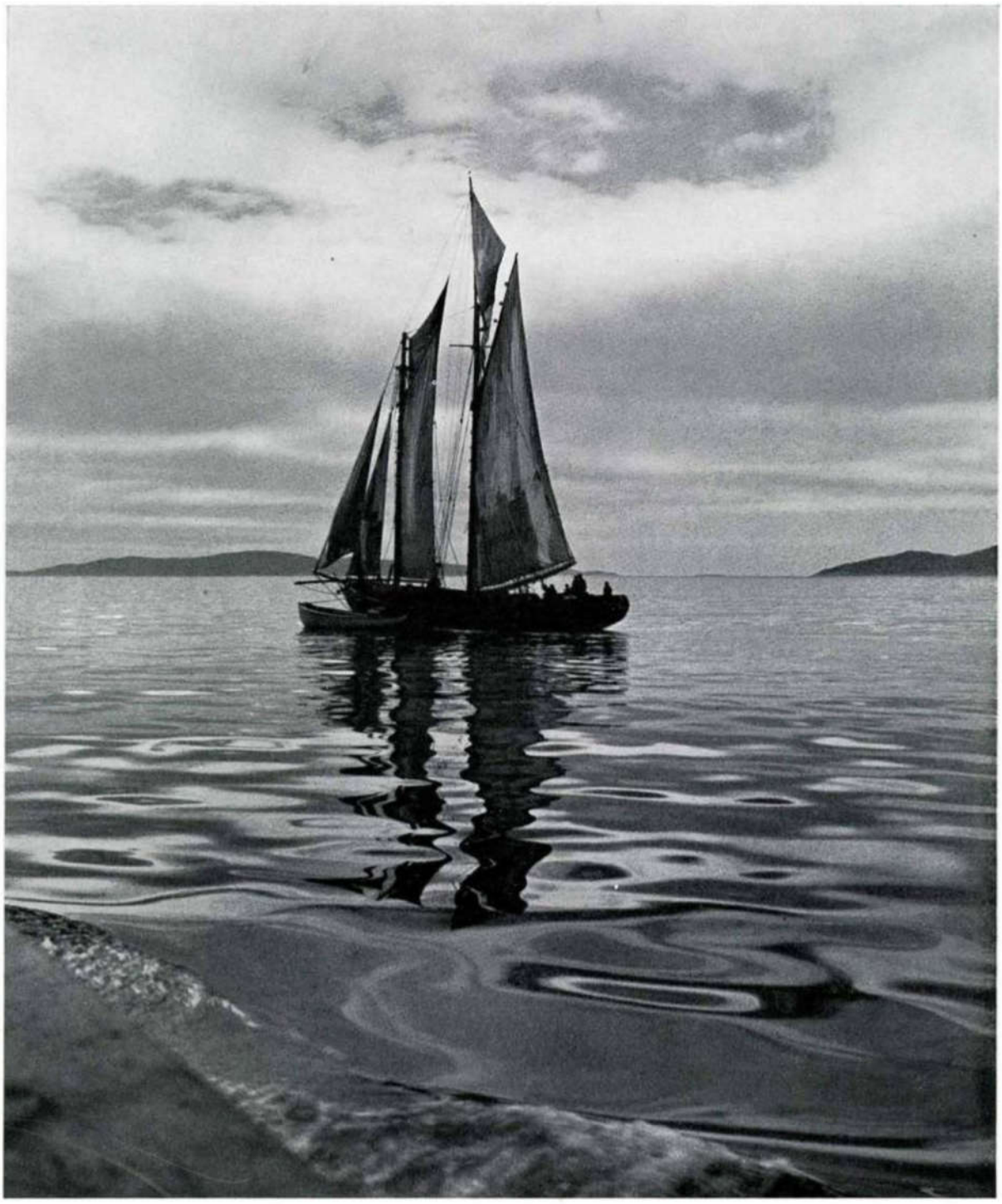
LABRADOR VOYAGE

Four photographs by

C. N. STEPHEN



Passing the great two-thousand-foot headland of Table Hill, near Cape Mugford, one of the highest points on the eastern coast of North America.



A fishing schooner from Newfoundland becalmed off the coast of Labrador.

BIRCH BARK CANOE

By Lynus R. Pattee
Pointe Bleue

IT really takes an old man to build a good birch-bark canoe. With nothing more to attend to than the canoe and his pipe, he can take the time to turn out a first class job.

His first task is to find a suitable white birch. Before chopping it down, he cuts away any underbrush that might damage the bark when the tree is felled. Then he fells a smaller tree in such a way that the birch will fall upon it, and rest with its trunk off the ground.

1

When all is ready, he sets to work and chops down the big tree. The woods resound to the thwack of steel on hardwood, and in a few minutes the birch lies prostrate across its small neighbour.

The Indian then inspects it closely to determine where the knife cut will be made along the length of the trunk. The bark is peeled off in two rolls from either side of the cut, and afterwards curled up into one large loose roll.

Returning home, the builder prepares his frame and rule, which are surprisingly accurately calculated by a series of arm-stretches and thumb-spans. When these "measurements" are finished, a whole blue print has been made, for on this frame and rule are marked the length of the canoe, the measurements for the final top frame, and the guide for a series of canoe ribs of varying lengths —and all coincide with each other.

The birch bark is laid out, weather side up, on a level patch of ground, upon which a layer of sand has first been spread. Stones are placed on the sides of the bark to prevent it from rolling up, and a lattice-like framework is laid on the centre of it and weighted down with more stones. After some time, cuts are made in the bark at intervals, from the frame outwards. This is done so that the bark may be turned up evenly along the canoe-shaped framework. The bark is left in this flat position for a day or two (1).

2

The craftsman then bends up the bark all along the framework. It is now just beginning to take the shape of a canoe, and to keep the bark in place, he drives stakes into the ground all round the hull. To prevent the bark curling inward, he places small upright sticks against the frame and ties them to the stakes (2). In this operation, care must be taken to get the bark evenly placed, or a good canoe may be spoiled at birth.

While the canoe is in this stage of construction, the bark is inspected for the last time. Any weak, thin places are cut out, and strong patches put in their place. The warmer the weather, the easier it is to work the birch bark, as it is more supple and

3

less easily torn. Sometimes the direct sunlight is too strong for the builder, and he puts up a shade improvised from an old tent or blanket (3). All cuts and joints in the bark have to be sewn. The thread used is the roots of the white pine or spruce which have been split down the centre and simmered or parboiled in a pail for a few hours. This semi-cooking makes the roots pliable and tendinous. No needle is used in the sewing. Instead, holes are made in the bark with an Indian awl and the root pulled through in a tight cross-stitch. In the picture (3) one of the roots can be seen near the man's left hand, and, beyond it, some stitching.

When the sewing is complete, the top frame is suspended in place. This has been made of two long strips of cedar which have been soaked in the lake for several days. They are tied together at the ends, then bent outwards, to form the shape of the canoe, by means of rough pieces of wood of various lengths placed between them at intervals.

4

To bend the bow and stern of the frame upwards, pieces of wood are placed under the ends, and the middle is weighted down by stones. When the frame dries, it retains this shape, and the thwarts, which have been fashioned with a crooked knife (4), are inserted in place of the rough spreaders.

5

6

When the top frame with its thwarts is in place (5), the excess bark is cut away to about an inch above the gunwales. It is now that the first and last nails are used, when the inch of bark is turned over the frame and a thin strip of cedar nailed on top of it. Before lifting the canoe from the ground, the builder patterns the curves at the ends (6).

7 8

The canoe is then lifted from its enclosure of wooden stakes and turned upside down (7). The excess bark is cut away and the ends securely sewn. (Note the snowshoe frame in the tree.)

The canoe is then turned over again, and the inside roughly painted with melted resin. At this point it consists of bark and top frame only, and is ready for the planking and ribs. These have been made of cedar with a crooked knife and plane (8. Note how the boy uses the knife).

The ribs have been soaked in the lake for several days before they are bent into shape and tied to dry (9. Note the bent ribs drying inside the old canoe). For the end ribs, which require a sharp bend, steam and hot water are used.

The planking is now laid in place (10) and kept there by the ribs (11). The ribs are fitted in by measuring them and cutting them off even with the gunwale. The ends are then placed under the

11 12

9 10

gunwales with the ribs at an oblique angle, and driven upright with a wooden mallet (12). No nails are used.

There remains the waterproofing of the seams all along the hull. For this, resin, lard, and powdered red ochre are mixed together—the ochre to prevent the mixture from cracking as well as to give it colour. This is usually done by a woman, who finds some shady place to work. She applies the mixture hot with a stick (13), then spitting on her fingers, molds it into a smooth strip. The finishing touch is a thin piece of canvas or other fabric, soaked in the mixture and pressed into bow and stern while hot.

Soon the great moment arrives when the finished canoe is placed in the water, and sets out on its maiden voyage—a thing of beauty and simplicity, fashioned from the forest by dextrous hands, riding the waves as lightly and gracefully as a gull.

13 14

INDIAN WEDDING

by Raymond Bell

WHAT happens when a parson bursts out laughing in church? I don't know: but it nearly happened to me once, at a wedding on an Indian mission.

The wedding had been a queer business from the first. The bride's grandson had disapproved of her fiancé and tried to forbid me to publish the banns. However, the happy day came around, and I was in church all ready to tie the nuptial knot. It was a warm summer day, and the church was pretty full, most of those present being children and grandchildren, nephews and nieces of the bridal pair.

The fateful hour had almost arrived; but the organist had not, and I was a little worried about it. Suddenly the church bell rang out, advising us that the bridal cortège was coming down the road; and, in that moment, the Indian organist hurried in and went to his place. "Which hymn, Dan?" I whispered. Dan rustled the pages of the book with a well licked thumb. "Forty-four!" he whispered back. Now the Cree hymnal is not well provided with wedding hymns, but I thought we could do better than

Brief life is here our portion,
Brief sorrow, short lived care.

So I anxiously urged him to try again.

At this moment there was a commotion at the door, and Here Comes the Bride! Here she comes, indeed, stalking up the aisle with the implacable purpose of a heavy tank, and dragging the little bridegroom by the hand. Behind them comes her son-in-law, as best man, hand in hand with the groom's daughter, acting as matron-of-honour.

William, the best man, is a tall and gangling creature. For this occasion he is sporting an ancient cutaway coat, with blue denim overall pants, and a white but collarless shirt, artistically secured at the throat with a little bow of red ribbon. From either ear protrudes a tuft of white cotton batting, for William suffers chronically from earache.

Lydia, the matron-of-honour, is wearing a black cashmere shawl, so that little of her costume appears except a pink silk skirt and her shabby old moccasins. She is very bashful at appearing in company with the tall widower, and keeps her face turned sideways and downwards in a coy attitude that would have looked charming on her twenty years ago.

Jonah, the groom, is just seventy years old, a shrivelled little husk of a man. His clothes have not been taken off by day or by night since the unimaginably distant day when they were new; and, since he always sleeps in an ancient feather-robe, they are liberally decorated with goose feathers adhering to the grease.

I turn to take in the splendours of the bride, but am interrupted by Dan, who whispers from the organ, "Number one twenty-three." "Hymn one twenty-three!" I proclaim, and look it up, to find to my horror that it reads:

O God, our Help in ages past,
Our Hope for years to come
Be thou our guard while troubles last . . .

Well it is too late to do anything about it; so I let it go. We all sing lustily while I make a quiet study of the bridal finery.

An Indian double wedding at Fort McKenzie, P.Q. Left: Rev. R. W. Wenham with the two fathers. Right, one of the youthful couples. C. N. Stephen

Her feet are shod in resplendently new moccasins. Above them is a huge expanse of purple dress, modelled on the general lines of a flour sack. It is high in the neck and ample, even for this bride, in the sleeves. Three festoons of pink ribbon, caught up with white rosettes, adorn the vasty front of it; and the contrast between this pink, the purple, and the fulvous orange of the moccasins is an intense optical shock.

I risk glancing higher. The bride's blooming face, glowing like a tomato from the attentions of yellow soap, belies her sixty-nine years. I suppose her hair is greying, but I never saw it in the fourteen years I have known her. The black kerchief of every day has been replaced by a festal one of that fuschia pink of which only the Hudson's Bay Company seems to know the secret source. This particular specimen is further enhanced with a violet border, and there is some sort of design printed on the front: but I have not time to study it; the hymn is ended.

The service proceeds. "Jonah, wilt thou have this woman to thy lawful wedded wife?" Jonah gasps at me like a stranded fish, speechless. His bride nudges him savagely in the ribs with her elbow; "Tell him!" she hisses. Jonah contrives to grunt, "Uh-huh." It is not the approved and official answer, but I let it pass. "Eliza, wilt thou take this man . . ." "*Tapwa pikwane*!" says Eliza, "I will that!"

"The ring, Jonah," I prompt. Jonah continues to stare with unseeing eye and open mouth. "The *ring*, man! Where's the ring?" I urge in a loud whisper. Presently my meaning dawns on his bewildered mind. "Ring?" he says, "Ring? I've got no ring. Where'd *I* get a ring?" This is very awkward. I look around the congregation. "Will someone please lend Jonah a ring?" I ask. But nobody will lend Jonah a ring: they all know Jonah. What to do? I am aware that the bride is speaking: "Here's a ring," she volunteers. "The ring my last husband gave me!" I am greatly relieved. "Take it off," I say; "we'll use that." But, alas, Eliza has put on the fat of fifty years since that ring was first bestowed and it is not to be got off by any means short of surgery. So we leave it there: Jonah is persuaded to cover it with his grimy paw, and to mumble after me, "With this ring I thee wed . . . and with all my worldly goods [Poor Jonah, that never had two nickels to rub together in all his life] I thee endow."

From time to time, as opportunity serves, I study the intriguing design of Eliza's head-scarf. It is a representation of Tom Mix on a bucking horse, and beneath is some sort of an inscription. I think of Eliza's masterful manner; I think of Dan's choice of hymns; and I nearly disgrace myself with a whoop of laughter. The inscription reads: *Ride 'im, Cowboy*!

An old print of the H B post Fort Defiance at The Pas, Manitoba, and Devon Mission parsonage and church, where the wedding described here took place.

Johnny in the pilot house of the "Distributor." Margaret Bourke-White, courtesy "Life."

JOHN BERENS—PILOT

He has served the Company along the Mackenzie River for 57 of his 71 years.

by George Pendleton
Edmonton

JOHN Berens is a pilot; a pilot on the Mackenzie and Slave rivers; which is to say he is a man of importance in the Northwest Territories. Pilots are a race apart. When they come aboard, whether it be at Father Point or Deal, at Sydney Heads or Fort Smith, passengers and crew alike feel a sense of well-being and security.

To say that pilots are born and not made may be a cliché, but nevertheless it is true in the case of river pilots. A great deal of the knowledge such a pilot possesses comes to him naturally; it is instinctive. Generations of men born by and gaining a livelihood from rivers must transmit to their progeny the accumulated knowledge of their shoals and currents.

Let us watch Johnny Berens at work. He stays aloft in a small pilot-house detached from the everyday life of the ship. He sits in an arm chair which, from its appearance, might have started life in an old-fashioned barber shop, or in the lobby of a country hotel. His left hand grasps the spokes of the large steering wheel, which from time to time he turns. But it is not his left hand which guides the vessel on its course. That is done with his right hand, which grasps a horizontal, tiller-like lever and this in turn, operates the throttle of the steam steering-engine controlling the twin rudders of the *Distributor*.

To the traveller, intent on business affairs, the price of fur, or the trend of trade, what John sees through the wide windows of the pilot-house may mean but little. The thoughts of a beauty-loving tourist may perhaps be more nearly attuned to John's reflections. He sees the play of light and shade on the water, ripples dimpling over its surface, a splash of water here, a fleck of foam there, and smooth, oil-like stretches here, there and everywhere.

John sees these things too, but to his inner mind they convey something more than beauty; they indicate to him hidden forces, some of which he must take advantage of, while others must be avoided at all costs if he is to deliver safely at its appointed destination his vessel and the cargo of lives and freight it bears.

The Mackenzie is one of the world's mighty rivers. Together with its tributaries, it drains almost one fifth of Canada's land surface. In places it is but a few hundred yards in breadth, in others it widens out to as much as two to three miles. Its channels and its currents are variable, pushing before it as it does millions of tons of silt and sand. Its waters carry on their surface mighty logs, while beneath, sometimes wholly hidden, are immense octopus-like root structures.

Because of these things, navigation would be hazardous to large craft were it not for men like Johnny Berens. Johnny loves the river in all its moods, but his love is tempered with respect and, perhaps, (although he might not admit it) fear.

We have to consider John's parentage and ancestry to understand why he became a pilot. He was the son of Samuel Berens, one of the "Berens River Men" so often mentioned by Sir George Simpson. Samuel was born at what later became Lower Fort Garry, in or about the year 1829. He died at Edmonton in January, 1899. As a boy he watched the Stone Fort being built by Duncan McRae. He remembered Chief Factor Alexander Christie, twice Governor of Assiniboia, under whose supervision it was built. At the Lower Fort he started to work for the Company as a dog driver. He worked in various capacities under Chief Factor McTavish and Mr. Bannerman. His work took him to York Factory and Cumberland House.

Samuel had three elder brothers, whom he never saw, around Berens River. He claimed that they gave their name to the river. When Samuel told John this, he had perhaps forgotten that a London merchant named Berens, who never saw Canada, was Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company from 1812 to 1822.

Samuel Berens became a pilot. In his youth he was surrounded by such a company of adventurers as has not existed in Canada since that time—boatmen from the Orkneys; clansmen from the Highlands; London apprentices, French-Canadian voyageurs. They knew the forests and prairies, but the rivers were their chief highways.

Samuel Berens settled at Fort Simpson in the early sixties. He married, and raised a family of husky boys. Between trips he was a carpenter, but his greatest moments were those when he grasped the steering oar of a York Boat. He knew every inch of the waterways between Methye Portage and Peel's River, and was never more proud than when he nosed his craft into the bank at Fort Simpson under the watchful eye of Chief Factor Julian Camsell. Mr. Camsell's monocle was somewhat disconcerting to offenders, and Samuel took care not to offend.

John Edward Berens was born at Fort Simpson on June 2nd, 1871. He learned something of the Three R's under the guidance of Bishop Reeves. But three other accomplishments were of greater importance to the growing lad—cookery, carpentry and the craft of the river. Johnny started with the first, but history does not record to what heights he attained. As he says, the only imported food-stuffs were flour, sugar, spices and tea, everything else was produced in the country; a cook could not go far wrong if he gave strong fare to strong men; quantity was placed before quality. Those were the "good old days" before any attention was given to balanced diets and calculated vitamins.

Johnny sometimes cooked afloat after steam transportation had come to the river, and here is where his fondness for music enters the story. He loved the old square dances, the Red River jig. These without a fiddle to accompany them were unthinkable. So Johnny saved his money and bought one. It was a beautiful fiddle and he fondled it like a mother her first-born. He was just a young cook on the S.S. *Wrigley* at the time. Between meals he delved into the mysteries of his beloved instrument and tried to learn the art of music by trial and error. He set out to discover the difference between *pizzicato* and *tremolando* and why the D-string groaned instead of sang. John Sutherland was engineer on the *Wrigley* at the time, and perhaps because his ears were more attuned to the music of the bag-pipes, Johnny's continued "scraping" got on his nerves. So much so, that one night there was a faint splash and the waters of the Mackenzie carried away the body of another victim. John Sutherland went back to his engines, but for a long time there was a marked coolness between cook and engineer. During the years Johnny's story of the event has gained in the telling, but he still thinks with deep feeling of the violin that drifted away in the night.

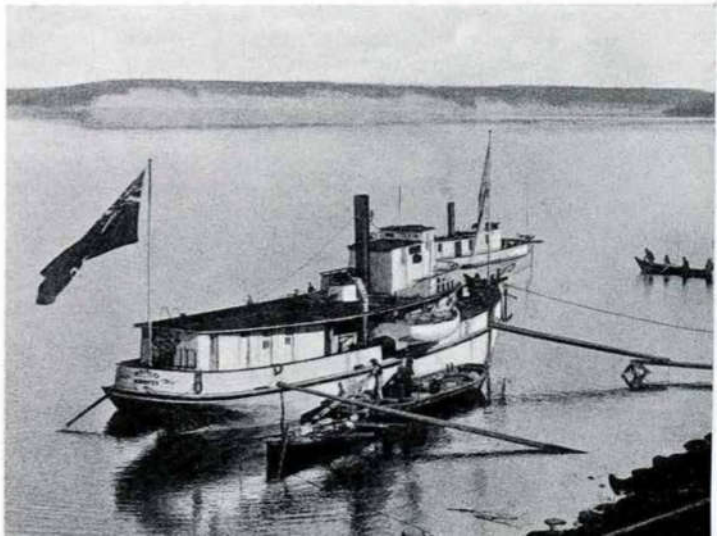
Johnny helped to build the first *Wrigley*, and served in her for several years under Captain John Smith. In 1896 he married Monique Lafferty. The couple had twelve children, but only five are now living.

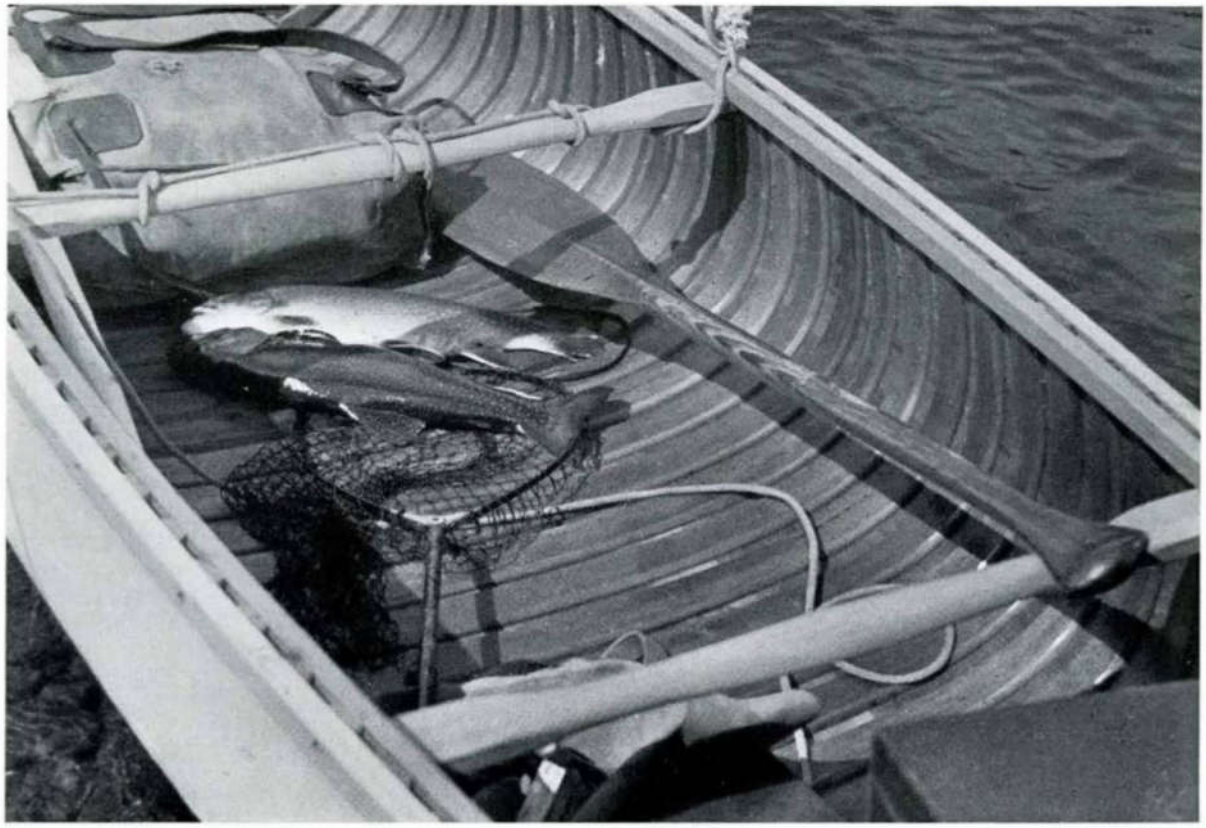
John started to work as a pilot in 1900. He served in that capacity on the second *Wrigley*, on the *Mackenzie River*, and later on the *Distributor*. He is proud of the fact that he has piloted two boats carrying Governors-General of Canada. The first was Baron Byng of Vimy, the second the late Lord Tweedsmuir.

As is to be expected, John Berens is a fluent speaker in native tongues; he says he can "handle" Chipewyan and Slavey, Hare Indian, Loucheux and Dogrib. After hearing him converse with the natives who come aboard at every stopping place between Fort Smith and Aklavik, there need be no doubt as to his ability as a linguist. He was post interpreter at Fort Simpson for some time, and his abilities are now often in demand at Fort Smith.

Johnny is a type that is rapidly passing from the life of the river. True, there will be many to follow him, but they will not be the same combination of old and new. Johnny is one who has graduated from the hand-power school to the mechanical age, and has lost nothing in the doing. Because of his knowledge of the hardships and inconveniences of the past, he appreciates all the more the benefits that have come with the present and softer age.

Johnny's first ship, the second "Wrigley," at Fort Simpson. C. W. Mathers photo.





Fisherman's vacation—canoe, paddle, packsack, and five-pound square-tails!

TROUT ALONG THE ALBANY

Story and Pictures by
Edwin Mills, Hamilton

SO LONG, fellows; see you at Fort Hope in two weeks' time—I hope!" Yorki closes the window of the Beuhl, gives her the gun, nearly swamping our canoe with his slip stream, and Jim and I are left alone floating on Keezhik Lake, north of the Albany and in the heart of the greatest speckled trout district on this continent.

All last winter we had been planning this trip. Jim had been over part of the route before and felt he could eliminate a lot of dead spots. We laid out each day's run, spent hours on the details of the grub box. An eighteen-foot canoe had to take us up and down small creeks and streams, but it also had to cover big water in Miminiska, Petawanga and forty-mile Eabamet Lake before we tied her onto the pontoon of Yorki's 'plane again. We travelled light, but were very comfortable.

The great drawback to Albany River fishing is the time it takes by canoe to reach the good speckled trout areas. There is no way to overcome this except by 'plane. This is the reason that the Albany has never been, and probably never will be, fished out.

Enquiries were piling up with the Department of Game and Fisheries in Toronto. D. J. Taylor, Deputy Minister, helped us with the 'plane in return for information to assist those who wanted to fish the Albany River without undue delay.

We chose that section of the country immediately north of the hump of Lake Superior, for several reasons. In the first place, this part of the river opens out into a series of beautiful island-dotted lakes. Into these lakes on both the north and south shores run innumerable small spring-fed creeks. In addition, great rivers like the Attwood, Eabamet and others empty their waters into and near the main stream at no great distance from each other.

These tributaries we knew to be trout spots. Not all of them of course, for I'm not one who subscribes to the idea that all you have to do on the Albany River is to put down a hook and line and pull out a five-pound trout. A lifetime of fishing has helped form the motto that "Trout are where you find them," and this applies to the Albany as in any other water.

We knew the rapids on the main river between these large lake levels were great spots for trout and, provided one knew how to fish big water, there would be no lack of interest there.

Finally we planned our trip for the latter part of August, when the flies would be gone, the water low and fishable, and we gave ourselves ample time to examine new streams along the route, so that fishing and travelling time was evenly distributed. The result was a most successful trip.

Down the beautiful little Keezhik River from that lake to Miminiska, mostly white water, but dotted with pools so attractive that the fly rod is set up all the way. We camped fifty feet from a spring hole at one of the upper pools. It was no hardship to get out of a sleeping bag and steal quietly over to the bank and watch half a dozen four and five-pounders lying a few feet off shore.

The exit from the upper part of Miminiska Lake to the lower half is via a shallow opening only a few hundred yards wide. We left the foot of Keezhik River in a heavy morning mist, and travelling by compass paddled due south until we ran aground on a sandbar.

Jim was a trapper and used to travelling by general conformation of the land. He said we were too far west, so we paddled east, or so we thought; but my compass kept protesting as we headed back towards the north. Eventually we turned about, went back to the wild rice and the bar and, hopping out of the canoe, pulled her over a few hundred yards and were afloat once more.

Near the spot where the Albany flows out of Miminiska, the Hudson's Bay Company had built Gloucester House—or so we thought. The map I had showed it in that locality, and my weakness for historical research, which has delayed the rest of the party on many occasions, began to get the best of me again.

We wasted half a day in vain search, alternating with each other in walking the shore line and paddling the canoe. Months later we learned that Gloucester House had actually been built on Washisagaigan Lake, some seventy miles in an air line farther down the Albany! However, we had a lot of fun looking for it, and we did hear afterwards from Dick Carson, manager of Fort Hope, that shortly after we left, the remains of some old post were discovered on Miminiska by a geologist. So maybe we just had the wrong name.

On the south shore of Petawanga are a number of unnamed creeks. Johnny Yes-no, free trader near Fort Hope, had marked one of these spots for big trout, just below the lake which was its source. He told Jim it was one day's travel, two days' mebbe! With what high hopes we started up that unnamed creek at crack of dawn.

It was a boiling hot day and the first portage was nearly a mile long. It was uncut and we used the axe most of the way. No sooner were we launched and feeling a little better, as the water was ice cold and looked trouty, than we came to our first log jam. Did you ever try to get over a big log just too low to under-pass an eighteen-foot canoe, and too high to push over conveniently? From that time on we alternated between log jams, brush piles, difficult shallow rapids, sand bars and other joys of upstream work.

At four o'clock, after incessant hard going, the climax was reached! We had been watching a sort of escarpment ahead for some time, but on reaching it the stream as far ahead as we could see came down through a series of enormous boulders impossible for canoe travel. We reconnoitred, and up above the river seemed to disappear in the muskeg!

We were half way to the source lake, but prudence called for a retreat. Down we went, taking several unnecessary risks but making good time. Long after dark we reached our cache at the mouth, and after

Rapids on the Albany in the wonderful fishing area between Miminiska and Petawanga.

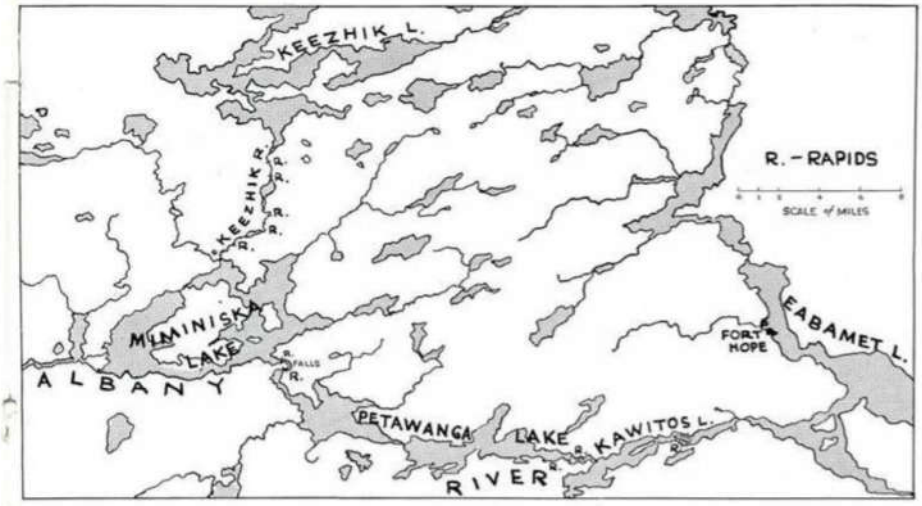
An Indian mother outside her birch bark wigwam near Fort Hope.

a hot meal we entered a new name for that river in our log and believe it will be approved by those who follow us. I know there are trout in that stream up top!

Down Petawanga twenty odd miles with a strong following gale, which necessitated a close watch by the stern paddler lest he be swamped. Huge boulders lie along the south shore, relics of a glacial age.

Jim had been filling me up for days about a spot between Petawanga and Kawitos Lakes. Said it was the greatest pool he had ever known. My private opinion regarding those "greatest of all" spots is to use plenty of salt. Just because the other fellow could do it doesn't always mean that they strike for me. If we could consistently scoop trout out of a pool like so much gravel we would not cherish the game.

Arriving at this remarkable pool, without even bothering to lighten the canoe, we poled carefully to the good spot, well out from shore. I had a casting rod set up and made a poor cast. The second one was just like the story books, fine and far off, quartering



on the flow, and it worked beautifully down behind a rock over which the water was just breaking. A savage strike and I was fast to the Gran'pa Snazzy of the pool!

No other fish on the trip gave me such a battle. Being well out in the main part of the river and the current very strong, it would have truly needed salmon tackle to hold him on a fly rod. The casting rod and twelve-pound test line made an ideal set-up. The trout, we found, weighed an even six pounds, was an old male with pronounced hook on his lower jaw and many battle scars on his flanks and fins. This fish we skinned and mounted.

We camped immediately afterwards opposite this spot, expecting good fishing next day. Cold weather put the fish down, however, and no more trout were taken from that spot. It is also possible that our catch was an old rogue which had driven all lesser trout from his bailiwick.

Off through Kawitos Lake and on up into Eabamet, and late in the evening into Fort Hope post.

There the post manager, Dick Carson, did everything to make our stay pleasant while waiting for the 'plane. Across the lake we visited a gold mine in the making; made a trip up Eabamet River; photographed Indians recently arrived from Attawapiskat River, and enjoyed our evenings in the hut kindly loaned us by the H B C.

The 'plane was bumpy coming in and we wanted a comfortable trip out. Accordingly we ate sparingly for two days, expecting to go out at any time. The third day we woke up famished, noted an almost zero ceiling and brewed ourselves a noble feed. As it was a two-in-one meal, it contained oatmeal, pancakes, bacon, ketchup, cornbread and gallons of coffee. We had just finished when somebody yelled, "Here comes the 'plane!" "My God!" said Jim, and his face fell a foot.

It was Yorki all right, but we corralled the beggar (always in a hurry) and made him stay for two hours on the phoniest of excuses. We finally took off, with Jim sitting on top of our bags in the fuselage and two over-ripe sturgeon beside him that Yorki wanted for his friends! I gave Jim about ten minutes . . . but he didn't need that long.

However, all's well that ends well. The weather turned good, and by nightfall we were out again, cleaned up and shaved and had marked off another good trip on the credit side of the ledger.

Camping in the muskeg with a well-floored tent.

Fresh trout for lunch beside a forest stream.

LOST ON THE PRAIRIES

by John Pritchard

THE author of this story came out from England as a young man about the beginning of last century, and joined the X. Y. Company. He was stationed at their post near the mouth of the Souris River (now in Manitoba) when the adventure he relates here befell him. The footnotes were made several years ago by Rev. George Bryce, author of The Remarkable History of the Hudson's Bay Company. *The manuscript was kindly offered to* THE BEAVER *by the narrator's grandson, the Most Rev. S. P. Matheson, formerly Archbishop of Rupert's Land.*

Shortly after his harrowing experience, Pritchard joined the Hudson's Bay Company and remained connected with it more or less until his death. He was one of the few survivors of the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816, and in 1820 was made president of the Buffalo Wool Company, with headquarters in the Red River Settlement. After he settled in East Kildonan, he became a member of the Council of Assiniboia, and for several years he carried on a boarding and day school, where many who joined the Company in later life were educated. In 1833, the Company granted him an annuity of £25 for life in recognition of his efforts in the cause of education.

"Though I was very young when he died," says the Archbishop, "I remember him, and recall his lameness resulting from his forty days' wanderings."

Neppigone, December 20th, 1805.

My dear Brother:

I shall now endeavour to give you an account of my wanderings and consequent sufferings last summer. Had it not been for the request I made you in my enclosed letter from the Grand Portage, I should have even suppressed it, and I trust my dear parents will never hear of it.

On the 10th of June one of our clerks, having had one of his horses stolen, came and applied to me to assist him with two others. That not being in my power, we agreed to go to the Mountain la Bosse (an establishment distant about fifty miles) and from there he was to take a guide to the River Qu'Appelle. On our arrival at the Mountain la Bosse we could by no means procure a guide and very foolishly risked the journey ourselves, it being a distance of about seventy miles across the plains. On the second night we plainly perceived our folly and consequently determined that if we could not find the River Qu'Appelle the next morning to return, and about twelve o'clock next day changed our route accordingly.

My friend went to fetch the horses and I began to gather wood in order to light a fire. I, perceiving my friend's horse unfettered, called to him not to endeavour to go near to him, or they would both run and we should lose them. I then made a fire to entice them as they were much tormented by the mosquitoes and in that case will immediately gallop to a smoke. My friend paid no attention to my advertisement but kept running after the horses till I lost sight of them. It was in vain for me, who was still extremely lame from my misfortune the preceding winter, to attempt following after him, therefore I thought it most advisable to make fires upon all the banks near me, which might be a guide to him, should he not be able to find his way to me.

Twelve o'clock came but not my friend. I now began to be almost disconsolate, and perceiving a hill at a considerable distance off which appeared to me to be in the plains, I determined to go there and make a fire. After having passed a thick wood, to my inexpressible grief I found the hill to be in the midst of another adjoining wood. When arrived at the hill from the top of which I had hopes of seeing the plains again, to my mortification I found myself surrounded by thick and almost inexpressible [impenetrable?] woods. I then determined to return to the encampment.

I had not advanced far before the sky began to darken, and a heavy storm of thunder and rain came on. It was now impossible to find my way back, having lost my guide the sun.[1] Towards night I found a small river with a considerable current in it. I determined to sleep there and the next day to follow its course, well knowing it must discharge itself with the great Red River. Next morning at break of day I began to prepare for my departure, but how dreadfully afflicting my situation, without even blanket, gun or knife, my shoes already worn out and nothing but my clothes to renew them with. It was then the fourth day, and I had eaten nothing except an egg and one frog the day before. The country was unknown to me and even had I known my way to my fort, the distance was so great I could have no hope, lame as I then was, of being able to reach it. I gave my soul to Almighty God and prayed that His and not my will might be done. Seeing death inevitable, I became calm and resigned to my fate.

Towards evening I discovered the plains and, as I thought, the great Red River, which pleased me much as I should then die with the hope of my body being found by the canoes in the fall; but what was still more pleasant to me, I found a kite's nest with two young ones. They were still unfledged and about the size of full-grown pigeon, I made a fire and singed the down off one, which I hastily devoured, the other I subsisted upon two days. What appeared to me to be the Red River was nothing more than a point of the woods on the river where I was. I walked or rather crept along this river for about ten days more, living chiefly upon frogs except three young magpies. I now perceived my body completely wasted. Nothing was left of me but my bones covered with a skin thinner than paper, I was perfectly naked, my clothes having been worn in shoes. I now perceived at a considerable distance to the right of me a river which appeared large, and being almost certain it was the Red River, purposed the next morning to make an effort to get to it.

1. From this point J. Pritchard and his companion started for a fort on the Qu'Appelle River which was some distance west of the Fort Ellice of today. They missed their road by going westward while they should have gone a little west of north. Plainly the wandering man was lost up near the source of the Pipestone River, which he followed down nearly to Oak Lake. He then struck over to the Souris River, which he mistook for the Assiniboine. The Assiniboine is spoken of by him as the Red River, just as Harmon, writing in June 19th, 1805 (page 141), speaks of the Assiniboine as the "Upper Red River."

Accordingly I set out. Having advanced a considerable distance across the plains, I became so thirsty I could not proceed. I then prayed to Almighty God that He in His great goodness suffer me to die of hunger and not of thirst, but if so it was His pleasure not mine, but His will be done. Our heavenly Father was pleased to hear my prayer, and I found a small spring very near me and was determined there to die, being fearful if I left the spring I would find no other water.

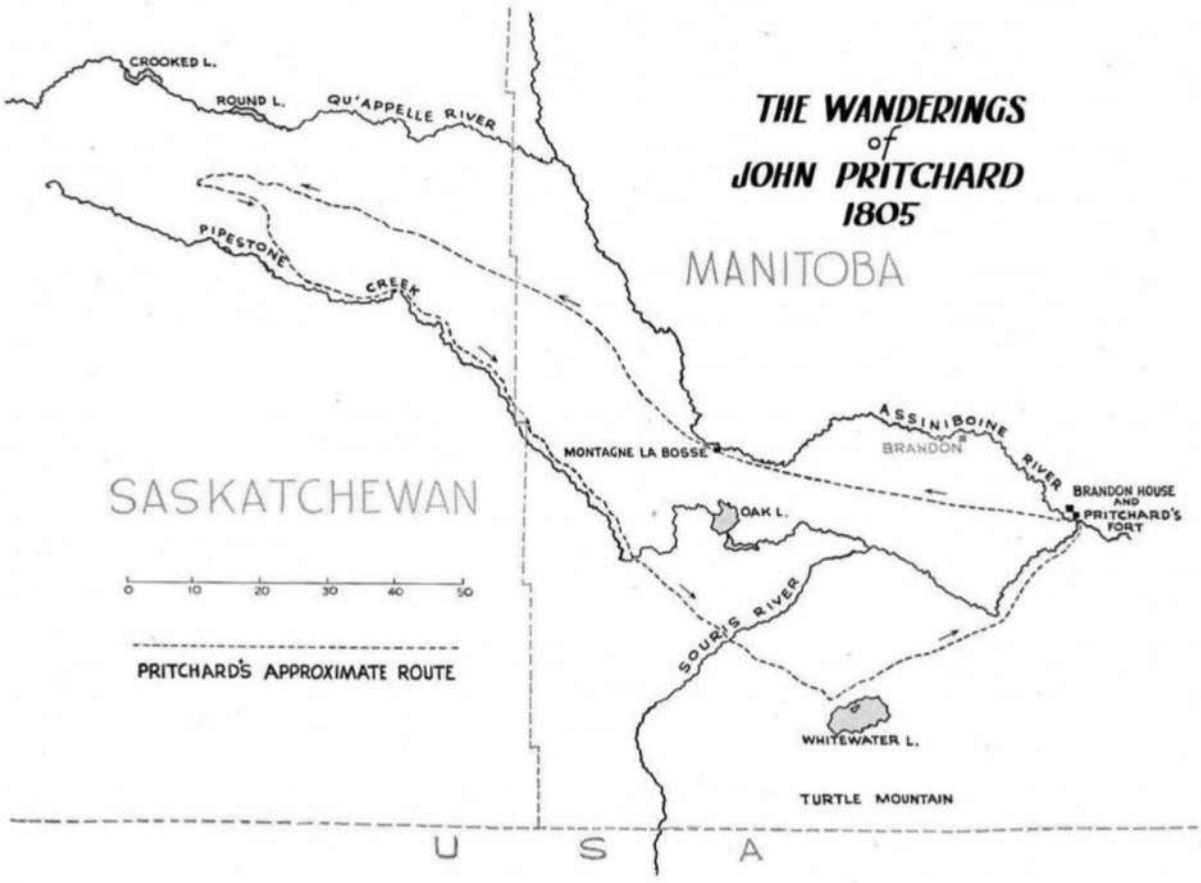
Oh, my dear brother, how shall I describe to you my feelings at this moment; what crimes, said I, have I committed to deserve so dreadful a death. My body I have seen wasted away by degrees, I have not a friend to close my eye or blanket to cover my body and far from a holy sepulchre receiving this my earthly frame, that wolf and yonder bird of prey wait only my parting breath to devour my poor remains.

On the next day I arrived at the river, and found it to be much smaller than the Red River.[2] I forded it, and advanced into the plains to a small lake, where I slept. Some days before, I had found a nest of small eggs about the size of sparrows', and I had eaten nothing else. How mortifying to me to see the buffaloes quenching their thirst in every lake near to which I slept, and geese and swans in abundance whilst I was dying of hunger in this land of plenty, for want of wherewith to kill.

2. J. Pritchard crossed the Souris, which he calls a river "much smaller than the Red River," and journeyed southeastward towards Turtle Mountain, thinking all the time he was far up the Assiniboine where the Shell River empties into it.

After having wandered about for some days, I perceived some woods at a distance which I again supposed were upon the banks of the Red River, but was again disappointed, and found it to be a mountain or chain of banks. I proceeded along the same till I found some water in a small brook, and, supposing there might be small fish, devoted a part of the next day to make a fishing line with my hair, and the wire of my hat buckle I worked with my teeth into the form of a hook, but had no opportunity of making use of it, as I found no fish. I here passed two days without eating, and on the second evening began to arrange my bed in the best manner I could, in order to breathe my last. Pain, disappointment, and hunger had now given way to despair. I was now so weak I could not get up the bank of the river, in order to put a mark, but upon my hands and knees.

I had not lain down many minutes, before my mind, or rather my soul, suggested to me my want of confidence in God's power and goodness, and the heinousness of my offence in thus abandoning myself to despair. I immediately rose and prayed my Heavenly Father to forgive, strengthen and support me. An old wolf trap being near to me, I took two sticks from it in order to help me up the bank. I was no sooner on its edge when a hen grouse flew directly in my face, as I suppose to protect its young. I threw my stick at it and she fell dead at my feet. It was not I that killed it, it was the Almighty, for I had not then sufficient strength. In an ecstacy of joy and gratitude, I threw myself upon the ground, and poured out thanks to the Giver of all goodness. I ate part of the bird that night



and the next day the rest, and then continued my route, not leaving the little river as I dreaded the want of water elsewhere. A serene and pleasant calm had now taken possession of my mind and never after forsook me. I this day found a plant, whose root the Canadians call the turnip of the plains. But not having a knife or axe to make a stick, I had no hope of digging them up; the root being at least a foot in the earth, and the ground extremely hard. The root is from two to three and one half inches long and one and one half in girth, by no means unpleasant to the palate. I thought upon the sticks I had taken from the wolf-trap, one of which I still retained. It having been pointed for its former use was in every respect fitted for my purpose. I therefore set to work, which was very great labour for me in my weak state. Having eaten a few raw, I returned to my encampment with about half a dozen, roasted them for supper, and found myself greatly refreshed next morning. I continually wandered about this river, living upon those roots and with now and then a frog, in the hope of seeing some hunter or other.

Every night I changed my encampment, each of which I supposed my last. On the thirtieth day, according to a stick upon which my teeth marked each miserable night, I perceived an elevated part of the plains, and immediately proceeded to it as from thence I could discover and be discovered at a greater distance. I found it to be an island in the middle of a large lake.[3] Being, as before mentioned, perfectly naked I did not venture to sleep there, being fearful its night-air would chill me to death; therefore I turned about and gained a point of the woods near, and slept or rather laid down under a fallen tree.

I next day set off in order to regain the little river, but on my way, behold and admire, the Providence of the Almighty! I fancied, and was certain, I saw Indians at a distance, on a different line to the route I was taking. I arrived at the place and found it, to my great disappointment, to be nothing more than a few bushes. I then went to gather grass to make a fire, being too weak to break the sticks for that purpose.

I had not proceeded half an acre before I perceived two old wintering houses. You cannot conceive with what ecstacy I beheld the remains of human dwelling. I supposed these houses to have been those of my friend Allen McDonald and the North West Company, at the lakes of the river Qu'Appelle.

I now went to set a mark upon a small bank near the houses, and to dig up a few roots to appease my hunger. On my return, I made a fire and afterwards arranged a bed, as far as my strength would admit, in the form of a coffin. Being so reduced I could have no hope of going on farther, the soles of my feet, particularly that of my lame leg, being worn to the bones, I now sat upon the bed, and, taking a piece of birch bark, began to mark with a nail the melancholy history of my sufferings. I had fixed upon the chimney being the bearer of my epitaph, the straw left by the winterers being my only shroud.

Whilst employed upon this melancholy occasion, I cast my eyes upon the ground, and, without any meaning, having taken up a piece of cord, found it to be tarred, and it struck me it must have belonged to the Hudson's Bay people. I then took notice of a sleigh that, from its make, I knew must have belonged to them. I now began to think I was mistaken in the place where I was, and that perhaps these were the Shell River houses. "But," said I, "there ought to be three, namely the Hudson's Bay Company's, North West Company's and our own." "Good God," I again exclaimed, "perhaps 'tis the Turtle Mountain, and that its lake, but I can soon satisfy myself."[4] The Hudson's Bay and North West Company passed part of last spring there, and if this is the place, I shall find wood cut in the spring, which must still be green. The houses I know are three years old. I directly looked about and, to my inexpressible joy, found a scaffold, for the purpose of putting meat upon, of green wood and many other marks of recent habitation.

Being now fully assured I was at the Turtle Mountain, an outpost from the establishment of my own neighbors distant from my own fort about sixty miles, I began with renovated hope to look into all the holes and corners for rags of any description to tie upon my feet, which were now in almost a putrid state.

I had the good fortune to find a pair of old shoes the under leather of which was worn away and several pair of socks. I wrapped the whole about my feet, spent the night in prayer, and next morning at break of day, after invoking the Almighty to strengthen, guide, and support me, I took the road across the plain as near as I could judge homewards. That night I had the good fortune to find, and encamp upon, a small river where I had been to hunt buffaloes a few days before I left my fort, and from whence there is a beaten path to my house, which I was greatly in need of, on account of my feet.

Towards the evening of the following day I discovered a band of Indians crossing the plains before me, but I was too weak to call out or increase my pace to overtake them. I raised my stick upon which I put a shoe and had the happiness to find they observed my signal. I was quite overpowered and stood immovable. Two little boys came running up to me, but my appearance was so dreadful they were afraid to approach for some time. I encouraged them by signals to come to me, which they did: I gave them my hand but was so overcome at once more beholding a human being, that I fell senseless to the ground. When I came to myself, I found the little boys carrying me to their father; who, seeing something amiss, was coming forward to me with his horse.

I was now helpless as a new-born infant, and too weak to ride on horseback, therefore the Indian carried me in his arms to his companions, to whom I was well known. On my arrival they came crying around me, one pulling off his shoes, another his stockings, and another covering me with his blanket; whilst my first friend was preparing a little pemmican of pounded buffalo meat and fat. Having eaten a little, for I was too far gone to have an appetite, and drank a cup of water; they prepared a kind of sleigh upon which I lay down, and was so drawn to their encampment, where we found about forty other tents of Indians.

Whilst our tents were being put up, the men, women and children formed a large circle round me. They were extremely silent and afraid to come near me. It is impossible to describe to you what I was. I had not the appearance of an inhabitant of this world. Picture to yourself a man whose bones are scraped, not an atom of flesh remaining, then cover those bones with a loose skin, fine as the bladder of an animal, beard of forty days growth, his hair full of filth and scabs. You will then have some idea of what I was.

3. The wanderer then seems to have reached White Water Lake near Turtle Mountain, where during the preceding year H B C and N.W.Co. had passed a season.

4. His surmise of his position was correct. He was now fifty or sixty miles from his own fort at the mouth of the Souris.

The next day the Indians took me to my fort, in the same way as I was drawn to their tents. On seeing my fort I again became senseless.[5] They carried me into my room, and you may suppose my people flocked about me, scarcely believing their senses. With tears in their eyes they kept a mournful silence round me. One of my men, an old man that greatly loved me, did not even know me.

Having recovered sufficient strength of mind, I gave to each my hand, and assured them nothing was amiss with me; that my intellects were as sound as ever, and that I was weak for want of nutriment. And now an universal joy played upon each countenance; one and all at the same time, putting questions to me. The news was soon at my neighbors. They and their men came running breathless to see me, my friend [John] McKay of the Hudson's Bay Company [at Brandon House, a gunshot away] brought with him flour, sugar, coffee and tea with a couple of grouse and immediately set a cooking himself as I believe the people were so transported that no one would have thought of providing for me.

Having taken a little refreshment, they washed, shaved and clothed me. McKay dressed my feet and he became both my surgeon and nurse. I had a long dispute with my people, who would not for some time, suffer me to look at myself in a glass, for fear I should be disconcerted with my appearance. For fifteen days I was obliged to keep my bed and to be carried about like a child. A few days after my arrival the clerk who had been my companion came to see me. He had caught the horses, but could not find our encampment and arrived on the fourth day in a most deplorable state at the Mountain la Bosse. Every effort I found had been resorted to in order to find me. It was very gratifying to me to learn I was so dear to my friends. Every one thought me dead. The Indians said it was impossible I could be alive, and when anyone spoke of me, it was "the poor deceased Pritchard." Even many of my people were afraid to pass near my chamber in the night, for fear of seeing my ghost.

The Kinistino Indians call me the Manitou, or Great Spirit, and some of them (according to their superstitious way of thinking) go so far as to say I possess a certain stone, which preserves me from all danger; as they can never suppose a white man could endure such misery. Even the mosquitoes they say were enough to kill me: indeed being naked, I suffered much from that insect. The Assiniboine Indians call me the Cheepi, which signifies a corpse, as such was my appearance when they found me.

I shall now make some general remarks. I suffered greatly by a kind of grass very common in the plains, called by the Canadians, and very justly, the thorn grass. Even your shoes and leather breeches it finds its way through. At night when I encamped my legs had the appearance of a porcupine. I durst not take them out in the day, as others would immediately enter, and at night you may suppose the blood flowed. I once found a few raspberries, and I once killed and skinned a snake in order to eat it, but supposing it poison, threw it away and resigned myself to God. Both Indians and white people who saw me said they had seen the bodies of men dead from hunger, but never saw one so disfigured as mine.

I never saw two days without rain, and in that case could make no fire, the grass being too wet to kindle, and I too weak to break wood, therefore the wet grass received my naked body for the night. You may imagine I did not sleep, and that I anxiously watched for the rising sun to warm my blood. Let us admire God's goodness, for who, but He, made me to suppose that I saw Indians in a different route from that my ideas were taking me, and by that means brought me to the houses.

5. After forty days the wanderer reached his own fort at the mouth of the Souris.

"I raised my stick upon which I put a shoe."

Marion Nichols

HUDSON'S BAY BRIDE

by Marion Nichols
Cape Smith

Pictures by the late Lorene Squire

Pete Nichols

IN 1938, Miss Marion Buell of Rochester went north on the Nascopie *for a pleasure cruise. Among the passengers were Miss Lorene Squire, and Miss Eileen Wallace who was going up to marry Alan Scott at Arctic Bay. Among the H B C men were bachelors Peter Nichols and Monty Demment. And Miss Eleanor Lundy of Troy, N.Y., went to Montreal to see her friend Miss Buell safely aboard.*

In 1940, Mrs. Demment (née Lundy) went north on the Nascopie *with her husband to live at Cape Dorset. And among the passengers was Miss Buell, who was going up to marry Peter Nichols at Cape Smith, Hudson Bay. (See* THE BEAVER, *Dec. 1940.) Mrs. Nichols has written of life in that bleak region so vividly and so enthusiastically that we have persuaded her to let us publish extracts from two of her last year's letters. She and her husband are due to come out by the* Nascopie *this summer.*

To Mrs. Stuart Watson, Winnipeg.

Here at Cape Smith now the ice has been blown out toward the horizon; and the sea, just a hundred feet from our front porch, is beautifully blue. In fact, the North is really showing its colours these days, for there are bright pink and yellow flowers bunching up between the rocks, and it's a wonderful feeling to have the spongy green moss under your skin boots. Somehow after the long winter's whiteness one certainly appreciates nature's "turning on the technicolour." It is so especially pleasant these days just to ramble over the slopes with a rifle on your shoulder and the hope that you may glimpse a seal to shoot at. So far I have shot nothing more impressive than a duck or partridge, and even after shooting one of the latter I always find myself turning sissy and feeling sorry for the poor things—especially when they are tame and just seem to land and pose for your bullets. It's so hard too, when they appear on the platter at dinner, to keep from remembering them clustered so whitely and serenely against the snow, and wishing they had been a little more suspicious and flown away before you pulled the trigger. Apparently, though, that is definitely not the right attitude to take toward hunting; and Pete, I think, is a little bewildered over anyone's being, what he calls, such a "reluctant hunter."

I am still hoping some day, however, to "mow down" a seal; but seal-hunting seems to be a very stealthy business. Until just a few weeks ago, the natives were out every day stalking the basking seal behind big white screens. Apparently, though, at just a whiff or a sight or a sound of anything human, the seal gives one wiggle and disappears into the water. Pete says that the polar bears also stalk the seal in the spring-time, but that the bear, being so much the colour of the ice, merely has to stop and cover his black nose with a big white paw when the seal raises its head to view the landscape o'er.

Around Cape Smith, there don't seem to be many bears—even though several times in the winter's twilight I was sure I could see some, but apparently it was just a good case of hallucination.

We now have three pet puppies—Balder, Dash and Bunkum—which were deposited by our door-step last week, and whose arrival, I am sure, made Pete and me far more excited than the mother-dog ever thought of being. . . .

To Miss Lorene Squire

As for life here at Cape Smith—honestly it is just super. There's always so much to be doing, so many laughs and so many little excitements—the latter ranging anywhere from little native Muk Kenuik going crazy (or becoming full of devils as the natives put it) to a whale unexpectedly mounding up in our little bay and all hands of course reaching for a rifle. The first time everybody suddenly dropped everything and perched themselves with fingers on triggers on various rocks—well, it seemed as though there must have been at least a submarine out there. But now I find myself whanging away with the rest of them. The other day one poked up right in front of me—practically crawled up along side of me on my rock—but, thinking he had been killed by a native who had just shot at him, I dumbly sat on taking aim (a blind man couldn't have missed) and thinking what a good shot it would be if somebody else hadn't shot first; and the whale meanwhile swims blithely off. I have since been informed that it is not customary for dead whales to look up out of the water.

I have also learned that seals are not like partridges in the matter of just sort of posing for your bullets. But I have yet to mow one down, even though the other day one of them popped his head up so close that I could see his whiskers. However, in spite of becoming rather irksomely familiar with "the ones that got away," always the hope that the Next Time . . . keeps you trudging back for more, waiting for hours on some ridgy rock, gazing at the water and hoping that some distant black speck will poke up

closer in the form of a dark seal head, and scraping frantically with a stone to try and lure the crittur close enough to seem a little bigger than the sight on your rifle.

Later—It's August first, and still no sign of the *Nascopie*, and still literally no end of ice—stretching out to the horizon and beyond. The last few days that should have been spent in polishing and picking dust out of corners etc. have been mostly whiled away by massaging puppy paws; for our three-months old pups, Balder, Dash and Bunkum, have suddenly developed some very curious ailment manifesting itself in collapsible hind legs. They are cute puppies, but they certainly wouldn't be much help to our team in pulling the kometic if they can't even pull their own hind legs along.

But this is getting nowhere—it's so hard to write letters from up here—sort of like an interplanetary correspondence, for this is such a remote little world from the one where people are going to the movies and teas and things and discussing so-and-so's new hat or new baby. Up here puppies and seals and whales are so much the important topic of the day that one forgets people outside don't give a hoot about those things.

As for the Eskimo language! Wouldn't you think a supposedly simple people would at least have a simple speech? Needless to say, my relationship with the natives is still mostly on a pantomime basis. But they are very likeable people—Owdloo (or something like that) looks like Slim Summerville with a nice happy smile; Tovlanwak is a chatty little man; and Akpallinak, our jovial looking but oh so pessimistic post-servant. Then there is Simon, his son, with his round face, legs so broad they almost form a circle, and perpetually embarrassed grin; and Betsy, the post-servant's wife, who scrubs our dishes and our laundry and our floors. You really should see our Betsy with her billowy layers of red and pink calico over her skin boots, her bright hair clips, tapering cigarette holder and hefty rifle. She is very competent when it comes to hacking up a whale or a seal, even though she isn't quite so competent over stray crumbs or kitchen cracks. She is definitely an organizer, the kind who should be a chairman of many committees. Of course she obviously regards me as a sort of simple soul, but we get along very well in our pantomime way—in fact I'm getting quite accustomed to her bewildered gapings at such things as a potato washer or a garter. And, really, after a while you begin to feel as if maybe it is the white people and not the natives who have the funny ways.

Certainly, when it comes to counter etiquette the natives are far less barbaric than the white people in city department stores. Though trading is of course to Pete all in the day's or usually night's work, it is fun to me to watch the little groups of hooded figures one by one dumping their frozen clumps of furs on the counter and receiving their trade with beaming, smiling appreciation.

It's fun, too, watching the teams come in—watching the faint distant clusters of black specks turn into a group of panting frisking dogs—for there's always a final spurt and tautening of traces as they reach the post, and usually a chorus of howls from our team to announce the other team's arrival.

Then there's the fun of going out to the floe's edge—which looks so strangely like the world's edge—and then waiting and watching and hoping for seal out there. And the rides on the kometic with nothing but smooth and sometimes rough sea ice as far as the horizon, and the dog paws springing up and down.

But there's so much that's fun up here—the partridge hunting in the fall, the pleasant rambles over the hills with a rifle on your shoulder; and now of course there are rides in the motor boat, and soon there'll be the setting of whale nets and the towing of the white stream-lined whales ashore and the hacking of them up for dog food—sounds messy, but it's such a methodical dissection and gets done with such relish (as a native every so often takes a lick at the gory edge of his knife) that it is really quite engrossing to the spectator.

In the fall, just a month or so before the partridge and geese start swooping down for a stop-over on their way south, there's the excitement of the walrus hunt, whose outcome (since walrus is the chief kennelration of the north) determines so much of the winter's travelling. I'm hoping that Pete and I can go along next fall, but it's a very collapsible chance, since, according to Pete, the seamy side of a September or so on a native schooner is a little too seamy for a white woman.

Last April, though, we did get in a trip to Povungnetuk—much fun, at least going down, and so funny the sleeping in a snow house—not that I'd care to take up housekeeping in one, but they really are quite surprisingly cosy little affairs after the primus stove starts going and you're all sealed up for the night. It's handy, too, simply shoving a big snow knife in the wall for a shelf or a place to hang your cap and merely scooping out a hunk of snow from a nearby block and shoving it in the kettle to turn to water to brush your teeth with. On the trip back, though, the wind and snow were really whooping it up so you couldn't even see the last dogs, much less where we were going, and our deerskins might as well have been lace. Of course, at one point one of my toes turned numb and I had visions of Pete having to chop it off with his pocket knife.

After being storm bound in another cozy snow house for about twenty-four hours, we finally made a dash for it, for by then we were out of dog-food, and the people-food of tea and frozen corned-beef sandwiches was beginning to seem not very delectable after two days out. But even though the dash did turn into an eight-hour siege of it with a young hurricane blasting head-on, everybody's faces and caps icicled and coated with frost and me lashed down like a corpse (and very much appreciating the sentiments of Sam McGee)—well, we got here, and personally I was ready to spend the rest of my days in an oven. To everybody else, though, such things are so definitely just a part of a day's work that of course any complaining or italicizing of any adversity is just not in the rules. I go into a huff over mosquitoes or the gasoline iron not lighting, but Pete and the natives, when a whale net gets tangled or when the motor boat lands on a hidden rock, just seem to skip the fussing and quietly set about righting the damage with a mere "such things will happen."

So far there has been no monotony or loneliness and the things of civilization are really not missed when they simply aren't here. In fact, sometimes I find myself thinking of life outside as being comparatively too drab and dull to be tolerable. Already the thought of leaving, except for seeing the family, has no appeal at all. . . .

POST GARDENS

The Fur Trade is encouraging the post staff to grow their own flowers and vegetables.

GARDENS at Hudson's Bay posts are nothing new. Journals and letters a hundred years old and more speak of the attempts of posts managers to provide fresh vegetables for themselves and their staff. Some of the big depots, like Fort Garry and Fort Vancouver, had their own farms. But only recently has the Company given scientific attention to its post gardens, which now grow not only vegetables, but flowers too.

The Fur Trade Department has supplied forty-page manuals to all its posts, giving instructions on the best way to cultivate gardens in northern latitudes. Last summer a competition was held and prizes given for the best vegetables and the most attractive flower gardens, and some of the results are seen on these pages.

This year a bigger and better contest has been sponsored by the Fur Trade, and special forms are provided for reporting methods and results. The competition is divided into four sections: 1, vegetable gardens; 2, champion vegetables; 3, flower gardens; 4, Arctic gardens. This last is open to all Ungava and Western Arctic District posts, and all Nelson River District posts from Eskimo Point north. All these posts are being provided with chemical sets to facilitate soilless gardening. Owing to the difficulty of communication, entries for the Arctic section cannot be judged until the fall of 1943. The closing date for all the others is November 15, 1942.

In the case of flower gardens, only wives and other female relatives of the post staff are eligible for prizes.

The report forms provided ask for the following information: Vegetable or flower, variety of seed, date and place of seeding, date first used or first flower, final harvest or blooming date, quantity harvested, garden pests, control of pests, type of soil, area of garden, fertilizer used, previous gardening experience, and climatic conditions. The judges will include C. R. Ure, Manitoba provincial horticulturist, and Dr. Leonard Butler, Fur Trade biologist.

But the actual winning of prizes is merely a side issue. Dr. Tisdall's studies of diet in the North have shown how necessary it is for the staff of the northern posts to have plenty of the vitamins that vegetables provide. And now, as canned foods become rarer, home-grown vegetables will acquire an increasing importance on the frontier as well as in the centres of population. Their cultivation, in fact, has become a necessity as well as a pastime.

Arctic garden under glass at Cape Dorset.

Mrs. N. S. Gaudin, with some produce from the first-prize vegetable garden at Nelson House, northern Manitoba, including the champion parsnips.

Above: The fourth-prize vegetable garden at Albany, Hudson Bay, growing cabbages, turnips, beets, parsnips, spinach, radishes, lettuce, tomatoes, chives, carrots, peas, onions and rhubarb. Right: The Anderson's second-prize flower garden at Albany.

Above: A garden path in England? No, it's at South Reindeer Lake, northern Manitoba.

These three linked pictures were all taken in the Dodman's garden at Hay River, Great Slave Lake. Reading up: The first-prize flower garden; Mrs. Dodman exhibits the squash; and some produce of the third-prize vegetable garden.

Right: John Forrest at Fort Liard, north of 60°, had to climb the fire ladder to admire his wife's prize sunflower in her third-prize flower garden.

Right: The Tipton's house at Telegraph Creek, northern B.C., is bowered in sweet peas. Below: This second-prize garden of the Tiptons produced the champion carrots and beans and the runners-up in parsnips.

Bottom right: W. Glennie at McLeod's Lake, B.C., shows some of his produce, including his second-prize beets.

SUMMER PACKET

Record Society

At the time of going to press, the fourth volume of the Hudson's Bay Record Society—*McLoughlin's Fort Vancouver Letters*—has not yet appeared. The introduction has been written by Dr. W. Kaye Lamb of the University of British Columbia, and some delay has been caused by the necessity of shipping all the proofs from London to Vancouver and back again. However, Dr. Lamb sent off the final proofs of his introduction by airmail in mid-April, and the book probably went to press shortly after their arrival.

In one way the delay was fortunate. For when Dr. Lamb was in Portland, Oregon, recently, he found a rough copy of McLoughlin's 1831 despatch (which is missing from the Company archives) in McLoughlin's letter book, now preserved in the library of Reed College. With the permission of Dr. Burt Brown Barker and Simeon Winch, great grandson of the "Big Doctor," a copy was made and airmailed to London for inclusion in the book.

A letter from E. E. Rich, general editor of the series, written in March, states that Volume V—*Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1671-4*—is almost catching up on Volume IV, and it is expected that both will be published within a few months' time.

Lorene Squire

The death of Lorene Squire will be regretted by *Beaver* readers all over the continent. In the past four years we have published few issues that have not been distinguished by her photographs—some of which are among the finest pictures of northern life ever made.

Miss Squire first began taking pictures for this magazine in 1937, when she went up to make studies of wildfowl in Northern Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. The following year she visited the Western and Eastern Arctics—being the first woman ever to do so in a single season. From the Mackenzie Delta she travelled across to Churchill, where she boarded the *Nascopie* for the northern half of the voyage. Those of her photos which we reproduce in this issue were taken during that trip. In 1939 she went up to the Rupert's House beaver preserve to take the remarkable pictures of beaver in their natural haunts which featured the December issue.

Reproductions of her photographs in magazines, and exhibitions of them in famous galleries, gradually won her public acclaim, and last year she was commissioned by *Life* to take colour photographs of bird life along the mid-continent flyway from January to September. The result (to quote *Life*) was "a magnificent record of one of the great phenomena of nature . . . which adds to her reputation as the country's best duck photographer." The pictures selected filled eight pages of the November 17th issue.

This year, *Life* had again commissioned her, to take pictures of nature on the prairie—"more or less in my own backyard," as she expressed it in a letter. On April 10, she left her home in Harper and drove to Pawhuska, Oklahoma, to take pictures of prairie chickens. The next day, she was driving with two friends when their station wagon crashed into the side of a bridge, and she was killed.

Miss Squire's relations with this Company were always of the happiest. Fur traders in northern posts admired her patience and persistence at work, and the cheerful way in which she stood up to hardships. Next winter, she was to make a trip for *The Beaver* to photograph fur trading operations in the snow-burdened forests among the mountains of B.C., and she was looking forward to it with characteristic eagerness. She was a charming companion, and her letters sparkled with enthusiasm and humour.

Lorene Squire's brief but brilliant career was cut short just as she was winning the recognition she deserved. But at least the results of her work will endure; for she has left behind a pictorial record that is permeated with the beauty of the North—the strange beauty of those far places "where the wild geese through the evening go flying and crying."

Contributors

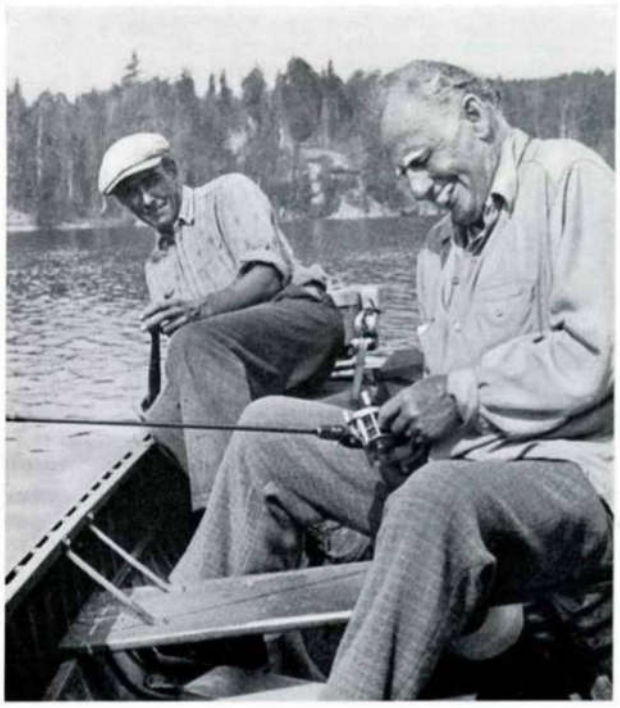
MARIUS BARBEAU, ethnologist at the National Museum in Ottawa, has made a special study of the folk and native songs of Canada, recording many of them for the museum's collection. . . . RAYMOND BELL is the pen name of the rector of the Anglican Church at Flin Flon, Manitoba. He was formerly in charge of Devon Mission at The Pas. . . . ALFRED COPLAND was District Manager of the Western Arctic. He is the author of the excellent article on Eskimos in the last *Beaver*. In March he resigned from the Company and joined the R.C.A.F. as Pilot Officer. . . . JOHN RIPLEY FORBES is a former director of the Kansas City Museum. He is now serving with the American Army. . . . EDWIN MILLS relaxes from the real estate business in Hamilton by going fishing in Northern Ontario. . . . C. PARNELL, Winnipeg historian, was the author of the article on R. M. Ballantyne in the December *Beaver*. . . . LYNUS R. PATTEE was a clerk at Pointe Bleue post when he took the excellent series of pictures on canoe building. He is now with the R.C.A.F. . . . GEORGE PENDLETON is district accountant of the Mackenzie-Athabaska district. . . . C. N. STEPHEN, who has been responsible for many fine *Beaver* photographs, is at present post manager at Lansdowne House.

NEWS PICTURES

In late April, H.E. the Governor-General and H.R.H. Princess Alice paid an informal Sunday visit to Lower Fort Garry, and were attended by representatives of the Motor Country Club (which occupies the premises) and the Hudson's Bay Company.

Above: The Governor-General reads the date (1807) on a bronze cannon guarding the clubhouse steps. Right: Their Excellencies examine the last of the York boats, preserved in the grounds of the fort. Beyond the Governor-General is the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, His Honour R. F. McWilliams, K.C., and at the right is Lieut. the Hon. Ernle Chatfield, R.N., A.D.C. to Their Excellencies.

Below: It was a meeting of old friends when Fred Stone, the American stage star, joined Bob Davis, celebrated columnist of the New York "Sun," at Kenora, Ontario. Left: Mr. Davis holds a loaded revolver while Mr. Stone prepares to fire it from a distance of thirty feet with his blacksnake whip. Right: Mr. Stone has difficulty with his fishing reel. Photos by Bob Davis.



Canadians in the canteen—formerly the L.C.C. assembly hall—before the bombing. A. Louis Jarche.

LONDON'S BEAVER CLUB

THE Beaver Club in London is a recreational club for Canadians and all other members of His Majesty's Forces. During the two years and more of its existence, it has become known as one of the best soldiers' clubs in London. Through letters and broadcasts, it is known equally well in Canada.

It is situated in Spring Gardens, a short street connecting Cockspur Street with The Mall. In earlier days Pepys records riding in this street, which apparently owes its name to the springy nature of the soil. Prince Rupert lived there, and several of the early meetings of the H B C Committee were held at his house. The club building is well over a hundred years old, and was previously occupied by the London County Council. It was vacant when Mrs. Vincent Massey, wife of the Canadian High Commissioner, discovered it and saw its possibilities as a club. One side of the building faces the Admiralty Arch, The Mall, and the Horse Guards' Parade. Small wonder that the Queen, who visited the club with His Majesty shortly after it opened, exclaimed as she looked out of a window in the spacious lounge, "What a beautiful location!"

Entrance to the club in Spring Gardens.

The club came into being as a result of a meeting of prominent Canadians in London who were called together by the Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey. At this meeting it was agreed that something should be done for Canadian soldiers along the lines of the old Beaver Hut in the Strand in the last war. An initial gift of £10,000 by Ernest H. Cooper, chairman of Gillette Industries, Limited, was supplemented by £10,000 from Mr. Charles Banks, a mining engineer who, although not a Canadian, is very interested in Canada, and by substantial gifts from the Canadian Red Cross, Lord Beaverbrook and others. Work was commenced in December, 1939, in accordance with plans prepared by the Canadian architect, Major Harvey Dawson, D.S.O., F.R.I.B.A., who so well timed the alterations as to make it possible to open the club on the date set—February 19, 1940.

The principal feature of the club was the canteen. This was the former London County Council assembly hall and was brilliant with a colour scheme devised by Mrs. Massey, who was responsible for the decorating and furnishing of the club. Visitors have been particularly impressed by the colour combinations and excellent taste shown in furnishings. The canteen was arranged cafeteria style, and two hundred soldiers could be accommodated at one sitting. This room was surrounded on two sides by the serving rooms and kitchens at the rear and Snack Bar, Tuck Shop and dining room. It was in this large and luxurious dining room, reputed to have the best dance floor in London, that the club dances and musical entertainments took place. Unfortunately on March 8th, 1941, it was partially demolished by a direct hit from an H.E. bomb and was condemned by the authorities.

It has been possible, however, to rehabilitate the Snack Bar, Tuck Shop and kitchens and more than a thousand men are served daily.

The loss of the canteen made it necessary to establish a hot meal service in the basement, the Hudson's Bay Company assisting with a gift of an electric cooking range. In what is now called the Quebec Kitchen a thousand meals are served daily. The corridor has been reinforced with steel and provides a shelter for the protection of the workers and soldiers, and in spite of many handicaps a continuous meal service is now maintained from eight in the morning until eight at night in the basement rooms.

The food available in England has been supplemented by a variety of supplies from Canada through the Canadian Y.M.C.A., in order that special Canadian dishes may be served, such as griddle cakes and maple syrup, doughnuts, fruit, and corn. Meals are spoken of as the best in London, and a three-course meal costs only one shilling and two pence. The attractive manner in which all food is served by the wonderful voluntary staff has added greatly to the popularity of the canteen and snack bar.

Because the Canadian Y.M.C.A. has generously contributed towards the operating expenses of the club, a number of free services have been instituted and are greatly appreciated. These include the Registration and Information Department with facilities for securing hospitality and bed accommodation (the club has no beds), sight-seeing tours, free tickets for theatres and other forms of entertainment, banking and postal facilities, lounge and reading rooms, games rooms, free issue of field comforts, first aid service, checking of kits, wash rooms, shower room and baths with towels and soap, shaving room (valeting, shoe shine and barber's shop being available on a pay basis) and entertainment such as dancing, broadcasts and musical events.

Of the above, the Information Department occupies an increasingly important place in the usefulness of

Mrs. P. Ashley Cooper, wife of the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, wearing her Beaver Club badge.

The Information Bureau answers innumerable questions from visiting Canadians.

the club, especially from the standpoint of personal service. Its staff is directed by a lady who gave executive direction to the work in the Beaver Hut in the last war, and she has an excellent group of co-workers. Thousands of men have been sent to friendly homes in England, Scotland and Wales. Thousands more have been directed to bed accommodation and large numbers of men are assisted daily in all manner of personal problems and provided with tickets for free entertainment and sight-seeing tours.

One very greatly appreciated service was the conducting of a series of picnics to stately homes and estates in an area surrounding London. Buses were used to take parties of sixty each Sunday afternoon to these wonderful homes, where hospitality was freely extended. On two occasions parties were taken to Hexton Manor, the beautiful home of the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company and Mrs. Cooper. Mrs. Cooper takes a prominent part in the Information Department, where her services have been generous and untiring. The club has been continuously supplied with flowers from her lovely gardens at Hexton Manor.

The general services so greatly enjoyed and so largely used by all uniformed men are made possible by the splendid group of voluntary workers. The register contains some six hundred names of English and Canadian ladies who have devoted themselves during their spare time to the cause. No words could too highly praise this efficient group. A paid staff of sixty employees makes possible other features of the club's activities.

The members of the C.A.S.F. are automatically made members of the Beaver Club, but more than 33,000 have signed register cards and secured membership cards. All other members of His Majesty's Forces enter as guests and are accorded full privileges.

Mrs. Davidson, the supervisor, and Mrs. Cooper, in the Information Bureau.

The club's second birthday, on February 19 this year, was marked by a visit of the Duke and Duchess of Kent, who were received by the chairman, Mr. Massey. Up to that time, 957,985 men had entered the club, and 1,266,000 meals had been served them. Nearly two hundred dances had been held, attended by 1,783, and seventy-three broadcasts had been made to Canada, attended by nearly forty thousand soldiers, sailors, and airmen. With fresh numbers of troops reaching England from Canada every now and then, the Beaver Club is looking forward to ever increasing activity and service.

The comfortable lounge where service men take their ease and read "The Beaver."

Governor Patrick Ashley Cooper presents long service awards to members of the London staff at a meeting of the Board on January 14. Left to right: H. Buswell, 25 years; Miss A. L. Harrison, 15 years; the Governor; R. Chick, 25 years; J. W. Metcalf, 30 years; E. W. Beaney, 20 years; A. Faux, 20 years; H. J. Smith, 25 years; A. J. Cattermole, 15 years; B. O'Hagan, 15 years; Miss L. A. Leonard, 25 years; Miss D. L. Hollis, 25 years.

LONDON OFFICE NEWS

MAJOR J. B. Morison, of the Land Department, Winnipeg, now serving with the Canadian Forces in England, attended the meeting of the Board on April 15 and received from the Governor a silver bar to his medal, in recognition of his completion of twenty years' service with the Company.

We have also been glad to welcome at Beaver House the following members of the Canadian staff serving with the Canadian Forces on this side: Gunner A. M. Turpin, from the Winnipeg store, serving with the R.C.A.; W. Baird, from the Winnipeg store, and Pilot Officer J. R. H. Pearson, of the Victoria store, both serving with the R.C.A.F.

We were glad to hear from F. L. Heyes, our technical superintendent in the Fur Department, that Mrs. Heyes and their two children had arrived safely to join him in Canada. Mr. Heyes has been temporarily transferred to the Fur Trade Department, and is at present in charge of the Fur Training School in Montreal.

The following further members of the London staff have been called up for various branches of service: W. H. Fisher, assistant engineer; E. W. Henderson, R. E. Thurley, G. A. Hunt and H. D. Handley, of the Accounts Department; F. J. Witteridge, fur warehouse; G. H. Taylor and H. Forster, commissionaires.

Our congratulations and best wishes are extended to Lieut. E. Jones, of the Accounts Department, who has recently married Miss G. Nield, of the W.R.N.S., a former member of our staff.

The British Broadcasting Corporation, on April 18, included in their overseas programme a special feature on the history of the Hudson's Bay Company from 1670 to 1870, particularly in regard to its bearing on the development of the British Empire. The broadcast, which was made to North America, Africa and the Pacific, was based on the Company's archives and prepared by Douglas Cleverdon, of the B.B.C., in collaboration with Lieut. E. E. Rich, the general editor of the Hudson's Bay Record Society.

BOOK REVIEWS

HERE'S TO CANADA, by Dorothy Duncan. The Musson Book Co., Toronto, and Harper & Bros., New York and London, 1941. Illustrated. 334 pages.

THE author of this book is an American who married a Canadian and now lives in Montreal. She has travelled extensively throughout Canada, and she is not afraid to criticize as well as praise. For this reason, it is doubtful if the book will be popular in some parts of Ontario. But, on the whole, the author writes of her adopted country with originality and enthusiasm.

Judging from the amount of information presented, she must have taken years to assemble her material. The text is occasionally interspersed with concise statements of fact, set in italics to differentiate them from the rest, and what follows is an enlargement of these statements. The book is divided into chapters by provinces, and each chapter ends with data on approaches to the province, on what to buy and where to get it, on other books dealing with the subject, and on sources of further information, such as tourist bureaus and booklets. About half of the chapter on Manitoba is devoted to the early history of the West and contains several quotations from the *Brief History of the Hudson's Bay Company*. The chapter on the Arctic Territories is the only one that has been written entirely from second-hand data. In short, *Here's to Canada* is a first rate book either for the prospective traveller or for the arm-chair tourist in search of information on the country. And of course, since everybody likes to read about themselves, it will have a great appeal for Canadians as well as Americans.

The Hudson's Bay Company, for instance, will like to read this about themselves: "In all the cities of western Canada one hears the inhabitants speak of something known as 'The Bay,' which turns out to be department store, criterion of style and price, social center, and purveyor of goods to all classes and kinds of people. The largest of these establishments is in Winnipeg, and, aside from its charming restaurant with a superb view of the city, my favorite spot in it is the Hudson's Bay Company museum, occupying the major portion of an entire floor."

As it happens, the museum occupies by no means the major portion of an entire floor; but the statement that it does will certainly not discourage people from visiting it. The author also confuses the Winnipeg department store with Hudson's Bay House. These are two of many minor errors which are sprinkled throughout the book. But considering the number of statements made, the errors form a very small percentage.

There are some, however, that one cannot ignore: 1. "Every night [in winter in the Laurentians] the thermometer falls to twenty-some below zero." Such a temperature is actually very rare; the coldest ever recorded in Montreal was above −30°F. 2. "Lord Selkirk's purpose [in establishing the Red River Colony] was chiefly selfish." The author possibly has been communing with the shade of some departed Nor'wester. Otherwise it is hard to imagine where she could have found evidence for such a statement. 3. "The ruins of Fort Prince of Wales stand to-day just as they were left by the French." The government engineers who were responsible for the restoration beg to differ. 4. "A four-point Hudson's Bay blanket is worth four beaver pelts." Change *is* to *was* and it's right. 5. The method of curing furs mentioned on page 319 is fortunately a myth. Eskimos use this method for dressing sealskin for their own use, but *never* furs. 6. "The water [in the Eastern Arctic] never gets warmer than twenty-nine degrees at any time, according to Sydney Montague in *North to Adventure*." The logs of the *Nascopie* north of Hudson Strait show that the average temperature last year, which was a bad one for ice, was about 34°, and the highest 50°.

On the whole, however, the book is reliable, well written, entertaining and often amusing. One of its most attractive features is the fifty-odd fine photographs, none smaller than half-page, which have been well chosen and beautifully reproduced.—*C.W.*

STEAMBOAT ROUND THE BEND . . .

That's the way to spend your holidays this year
—see Canada by river steamer!

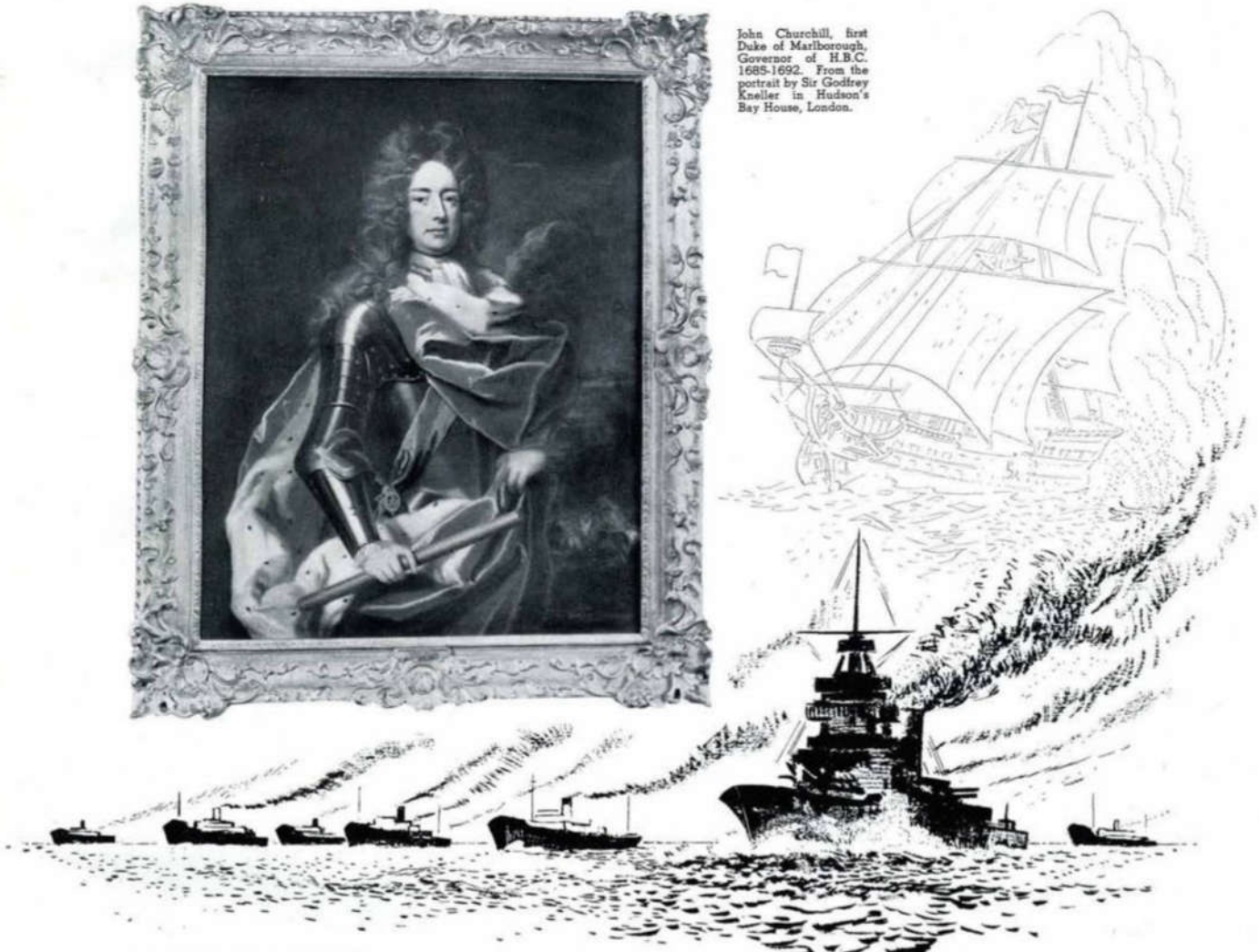
No worry about gas or tires. You go by rail to the head of navigation at Waterways, board one of our comfortable sternwheelers there, and travel by water all the way to the Arctic Ocean!
A trip to tell your friends about. But only three a year, starting in June, July, and August. Write now for full particulars to

Hudson's Bay Company
Mackenzie River Division, Transport Department
10129 103rd St., Edmonton, Alberta.

The Beaver is printed for the Hudson's Bay Company by Saults & Pollard Limited, Winnipeg, Canada, and the engravings are made by Brigdens of Winnipeg Limited

This publication has satisfied itself that this advertisement has received the prior approval of the Government Liquor Control Commission as required by the Statutes.

John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough, Governor of H.B.C. 1685-1692. From the portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller in Hudson's Bay House, London.



THEN AS NOW...

In the early 1700's, when the first shipments of Scotch whisky were brought to America by the Hudson's Bay Company, war lay heavy on the British Empire. Outposts of trade had fallen . . . naval warfare made commerce difficult. . . .

And, then as now, a Churchill—John, Duke of Marlborough, one time governor of the Hudson's Bay Company—was giving his "blood, sweat and tears" to bring the Allies to final victory.

Through that war and a dozen since, the Company has been importing the finest of Scotch whiskies—then for the enjoyment of its officers, now for the enjoyment of two nations.

Hudson's Bay
Best Procurable
SCOTCH WHISKY

1892

1942

1892—1942

IMPERIAL MIXTURE

CANADA'S MOST FAMOUS TOBACCO . . . for Half a Century . . . . . has always had virtues claimed now by many newer brands—perfect blending of many types of leaf, long matured in oak hogsheads, aided by Latakia and smooth velvety Perique, with Jamaica Rum to flavour as the last exquisite touch.

Celebrating its fiftieth birthday, this magnificent blend of pipe tobacco retains the full rich aromatic deliciousness for which it is famed.

Marking the event and giving you these same characteristics in a less full-bodied mixture, we present—born in 1942—

IMPERIAL MIXTURE—MILD

Packed in the 25c Vacuum Tin

Distinguished from the "ORIGINAL" Strength
by the Blue Strip Label and the word "MILD"